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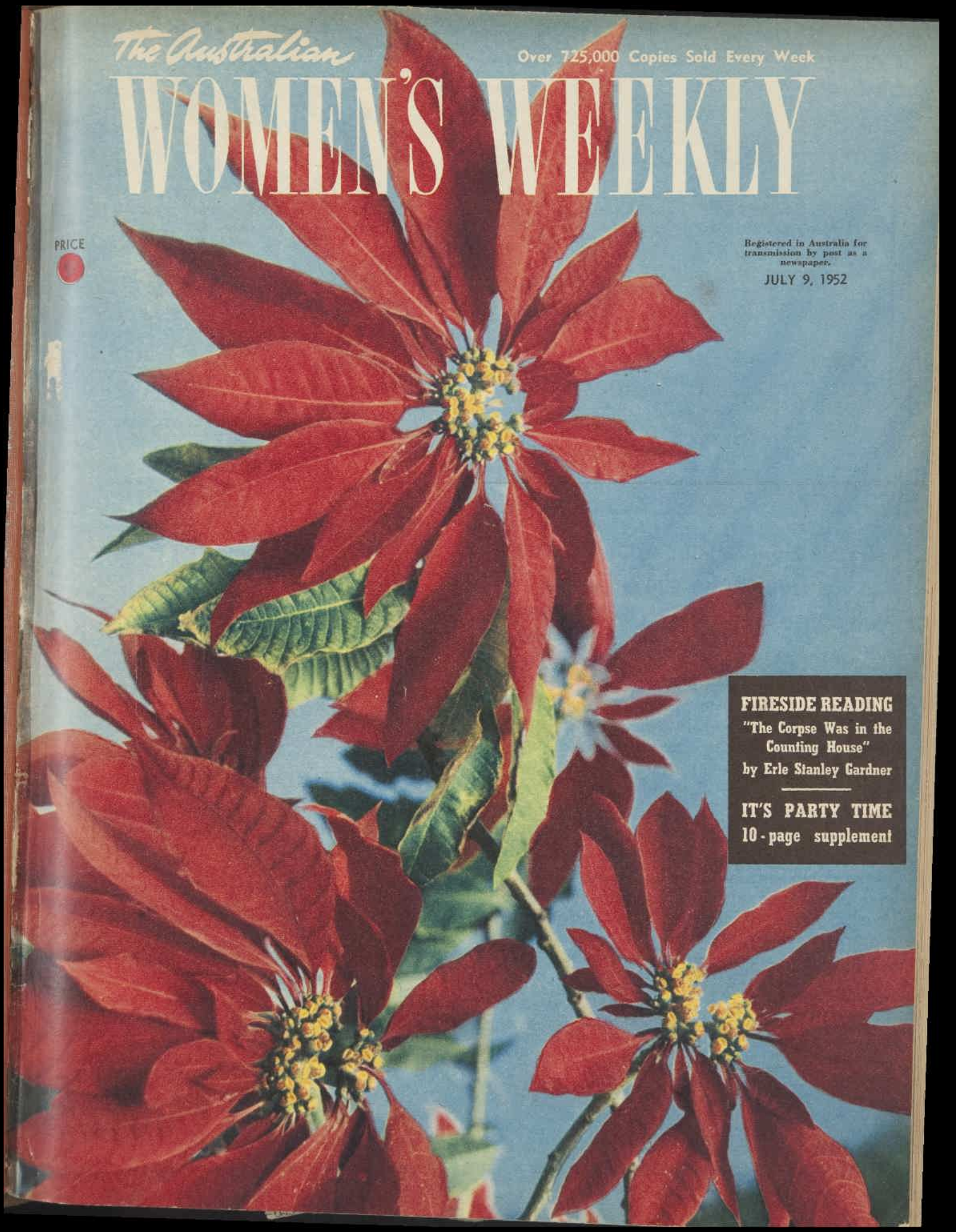

FIRESIDE READING
"The Corpse Was in the Counting House"
by Erle Stanley Gardner

IT'S PARTY TIME
10-page supplement

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"Please Granny--"

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WOLF at the door

Mama Costello had always been troubled by the one at the door, but she now had to combat this new, unknown and menacing wolf....

By JULIA SMITH

ILLUSTRATED BY DALGLEISH

THE sign said "Home-made Cakes and Pastry," and underneath, in smaller letters, Maria Costello. It should have been Mama instead of Maria, for she was called Mama not only by Pedro, who had been her husband, and little Peronella—her bambina—her joy in life, her golden-voiced one—but also by her neighbors and most of her regular customers.

Ample of proportion, neat in her floral blouse and dark skirt, enveloped in a voluminous white apron, she radiated a kind of homely simplicity, good nature, and down-to-earth wisdom of the truly motherly woman.

Her husband, Pedro, was dead these twelve months, and Mama Costello still felt the bewildered loneliness his sudden going had plunged her into. True, she had Peronella. With her quick, happy smile, her gentle, considerate ways, and her voice, as pure and sweet as any angel's! But Mama missed Pedro acutely, for now she had only her own strength to rely on.

The display window of the little shop was dark and devoid of its daily array of tempting cakes, little tarts, and biscuits. The entrance door to the shop was bolted. It was long after closing time.

Mama Costello sat in the little living-room, beyond the shop. It adjoined a very large kitchen—the only large room her home could boast—for the two bedrooms, one hers, the other Peronella's, were even smaller than the little living-room.

She had an open accounts book on the table before her, and with a lead pencil was laboriously working out additions, divisions, and subtractions.

Mama Costello sighed. Almost nothing left for putting towards Peronella's dowry. Well, she was doing her best. Lupo alla porta—the wolf at the door—had not got in. Pedro had often used that expression. She knew it meant only keeping want from the door, but in her imagination she could almost see a large sinister shape, with coarse hair and the slavering jaws of the ferocious animal.

Yes, he must certainly not get inside. He would hurt Peronella. For her own safety Mama Costello had a complete disregard.

She looked around the little room. Neat and orderly and cosy, reflecting Mama Costello herself. Polished lino on the floor and white lace curtains draping the window. A gaily embroidered cloth over the table at which she sat, embroidered cushions arranged on the little settee by the wall. A cupboard containing Peronella's books; and on it, arranged so that it could be seen almost from any angle of the room, a photograph. Just an ordinary man's face, with nothing remarkable about it.

But seen through Mama Costello's eyes it achieved almost extraordinary beauty and nobility, for each time that she looked on the picture she saw the character she knew as well as the beloved face. It was comforting to have him there, looking at her. It helped, in a measure, to offset her sense of loss. Just as she was wont to consult him on any matter while he was alive, so she now often spoke to his picture. It gave her no reply—true—but it helped her, somehow, to make her own decisions.

The radio was turned on. As Mama Costello wrestled with her accounts she ignored the latest newscast. Men knew about such things. Mama Costello, unskilled in world affairs, had a light hand with pastry, a special way of beating up a cake mixture. Beyond that she did not presume to venture.

She heard the radio announcer speak a few words, the import of which escaped her; then a sweet, strong young voice burst into colorful sound in an aria from "Rigoletto." Mama Costello, pencil poised in her hand, instantly gave all her attention to listening. The golden notes fell in a cascade of molten sunbeams, filling the room with color.

Not until the last note had died away did Mama Costello move in her chair. Then she rose and turned off the radio.

"Did you heard that voice, Pedro?" she addressed the photograph. "Just like Peronella's. Beautiful, beautiful. Ah,"—Mama Costello was audibly wishing—"for our bambina to sing on the radio. And on the concert platform, perhaps. She look so pretty." Her face shone in happy conjecture. "She give pleasure to many peoples, she with the lovely voice like she has.

"But — no money for expensive singing lessons. Ah, Dios—I manage good school, yes — Peronella spik English quite proper. She look like proper lady, too. Maybe marry nice gentleman some day, have safe, happy life. No wolf at door for Peronella."

The chiming of the clock on the mantel interrupted Mama Costello's train of thought.

"Ten o'clock."

She hadn't noticed the passage of time. "Where is Peronella? Every night she coming home late. And never say where she go."

She tried to recall each occasion. At first she did not attach any significance to it. Gone to another girl's home, most likely. Or to the pictures. Studying hard, Peronella deserved some pleasure. But she would come home from school and study a while, then get dressed in her street clothes, and simply say, "I'm going out, Mama."

Each time she would leave the house, bright-eyed, expectant, as though going to a tryst. Mama Costello's train of thought halted abruptly. Yes—and when she returned? Flushed and happy, as though she had spent her time with someone beloved.

Mama Costello, really worried now, thought: "Bambina, what you doing? You are so young yet."

The fact that Peronella said nothing about it appeared sinister. The open nature of the girl made her confide in her mother without prompting. There never was the need to ask questions. So for a time it simply did not occur to Mama Costello to break the rule. Later she felt diffidence. La bambina would think her mother did not trust her. So she waited patiently. But Peronella continued to return home with a radiance on her face and no word of explanation on her lips.

Now to-night, again. Mama Costello shook her head. This must stop. Peronella was only just sixteen. Too young to go out with men. Too young to think of marriage. Must first finish her schooling. Yet it couldn't be that she just went out with other girls, for no outing with another girl would paint that special delight on her pretty face.

Mama Costello went into her kitchen. On a large table covered by spotless oilcloth she laid out her utensils. She brought out a large fruit cake from a cupboard and arranged it on a small silver platform.

Please turn to page 4

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Wolf at the Door

Continued from page 3

QUICKLY she beat up the icing mixture and covered the cake with it. Now came the decorating. From a carton she lifted clusters of sugar roses, lovers' knots, and little Cupids.

Mama Costello had just finished and was placing the lovers' knots and Cupids in position when she heard light footsteps hurrying down the laneway which divided Mama Costello's shop and dwelling from the adjoining house.

In a moment Peronella was in the kitchen—bringing with her a sense of breathless and gay excitement. She kissed and embraced her mother.

"Working so late, dear? Let me help you."

"Peronella." Anxiety lent a stern note to her voice. "Where you go in the evenings? Where you been now? I have never ask you before, and you never tell me." Her voice trailed away uncertainly.

Peronella looked confused. "Don't ask me, Mama. I—mustn't tell you. But don't worry, dear, please don't worry. You know I wouldn't think of doing anything—wrong."

"I know. But the other peoples. They, perhaps, do bad things to my bambina. You so young." Mama Costello took a deep breath. "Who is the man?"

"Oh, Mama." Peronella sounded impatient. "I can't tell you who he is. And it's not what you think. And let me be. I'm—tired."

Peronella ran into her bedroom, shutting the door. Mama Costello stood in the middle of her kitchen, hands limp at her sides. Never had her little girl spoken to her in that way. And now Peronella thought her Mama did not trust her.

But it is something about a man, Mama Costello thought grimly. Peronella would do no wrong; Mama was as sure of her child as she was of the angels. But she placed no trust in strange men.

She turned to resume her work. The rosebuds did not appear to sit just right. Mama Costello took a little wooden spatula and moved the cluster. In doing so she ruined a delicate petal.

"Ah," she mourned, "nothing is go right."

Peronella's door opened and the girl came into the kitchen. Looking at her, Mama Costello thought for the thousandth time, "So beautiful she is. I work for her, I pray for her—but how to keep Peronella safe?"

Peronella was smiling at her mother. She ran to her and hugged her.

"Let me help you, Mama. We'll finish the job together. And I'll get up early in the morning and make you some coffee, and you shall have it in bed—like any fine signora. Then I'll help you with your baking before I leave for school.

"Now don't you look worried. And I'm sorry that I upset you." Coaxingly, she smiled into her mother's eyes.

There was no getting away from it. With Peronella beside her, Mama Costello could not help but feel happy. Still, her worry persisted. She voiced it. "Who is the man? Tell Mama. You maybe want marry him?"

Surprised, Peronella looked at her. "Oh, Mama, you are silly. He's married."

It was like a blow to Mama Costello. An early romance, well, maybe. Though strictly against good judgment. But an affair with a married man!

Peronella looked at her mother. "Mama," she said, "you are still worried. I can't tell you anything because we wanted to surprise you."

"Yes, indeed, you surprise me," Mama Costello said bitterly. "I am so surprise my breath is take away."

"Listen." Peronella's face bore the rapt look so often seen on it of late. "I did not want you to know anything about this until"—she paused for a moment—"until everything's really arranged. It is going to be a most tremendous surprise for you. I am trying to do something to make you very happy."

"I know nussings," said Mama Costello. "I want you should tell me now."

"Mama, darling Mama, just wait until to-morrow," pleaded Peronella.

IN silence they finished the work in the kitchen. In silence they prepared for bed.

The following morning, despite Peronella's ministrations, Mama continued silent and depressed. The kitchen was filled with the warm, spicy smell of baking when Peronella left for school, still with the unexplained gulf between herself and her mother.

Mama Costello arranged little trays of fancy pastry in the window. The large wedding cake, resplendent with clusters of sugar roses and cherubs, took pride of place in the centre to catch the eyes of passers-by until fetched by Mrs. Harrison, whose second daughter was being married that day.

Mrs. Harrison came early. She was full of self-importance, as befits the mother of the bride.

"It's real pretty, Mama Costello. You should see my Connie's wedding dress. The dressmaker just finished it. Cutting it fine, I thinks to meself. Should've had it made in plenty of time. Still, it's ready, that's the main thing. And the veil—my Connie will make a lovely bride."

"Connie ver' beautiful girl," Mama Costello said generously. She could afford to, knowing no girl in the street could hold a candle to Peronella.

"Yes," sighed Mrs. Harrison, "I feel quite pleased—both my daughters got husbands for themselves. Makes a mother feel they're safe." She cocked a sharp eye at Mama Costello. "Your girl engaged?"

"My Peronella? Tchah," said Mama Costello. "She only sixteen. Too young she is."

"Some mightn't think so," commented Mrs. Harrison. "Now that you remind me, my Connie saw your girl in town with a fellow. A regular wolf he looked, Connie said." Mrs. Harrison snickered. "Twice she saw them. And getting out of a flash car they were, too."

"Connie make mistake. Not my Peronella she see." Mama Costello, trying to sound offhand, felt her heart turn to ice within her.

"Now, Mama Costello, my Connie is no fool. She noticed particular. Your girl was wearing a red check skirt and a blue jacket."

"Plenty red skirt and blue jacket in town. Not my Peronella your girl see," repeated Mama Costello firmly.

"Well, dearie, if you take it this way—" Mrs. Harrison sounded aggrieved. "All I can say is, I'm thankful my girls never gave me any worry." She went, carrying her cake.

Almost blindly, Mama Costello stumbled through her kitchen and into the little living-room.

"Pedro," she cried, turning to the photograph, "now what I do? Lupo at door—I work, work, keep him off our bambina. Now lupo in street, too. How I should fight that one?"

For once she failed to derive comfort from her one-sided conversation with her husband's picture.

The little bell on the shop door jangled gaily and Mama Costello hurried to attend to a customer. While wrestling with her problem how best to combat this new, unknown, and menacing wolf, she at least could try to keep the familiar one at the door at bay.

Business was unusually good. Mama Costello was very busy all day. Yet her thoughts were busier still. And no matter how she tried, she could think of no happy solution to the problem.

Afternoon came, and she watched for Peronella. The bus stop was at the corner of the street. Surely she would come any minute. It was a quarter to five now, and the bus which usually brought Peronella home had stopped—Mama Costello could see it from the doorway of her shop—unloaded its passengers, and rumbled away. Peronella had not come. She was not on the next bus, either.

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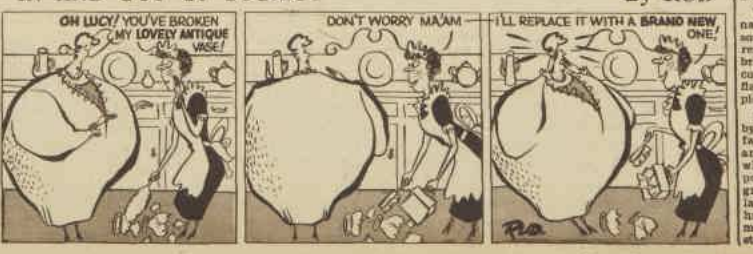
IN AND OUT OF SOCIETY

By RUD



MANNEQUIN—EXTRA S.S.W.!

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Voice of a dove

By DOROTHY EDEN

AS soon as SARAH STACEY accepts the position of governess to motherless JENNIE FOSTER she realises that the household is an unusual and depressing one.

Jennie receives little companionship from her family, which includes her father, ELIOT FOSTER, an unsuccessful composer; OLIVER FOSTER, a rising playwright, and his neurotic wife, VENETIA; and old MRS. FOSTER. TIM ROYLE, brother of Jennie's dead mother, Mary, is a visitor.

Disquieting things happen from the time of Sarah's arrival. Tim shows her a flight of steps down which his sister, Mary, had fallen to her death. He hints that it was not accidental. A valuable ring is stolen and mysteriously returned.

RACHEL MASSEY, to star in Oliver's forthcoming play, and the producer, BURGESS REID, suggest that LEXIE ADAMS, Rachel's actress friend, was murdered. Eliot and Oliver quarrel, and Eliot threatens to "tell Venetia everything." Venetia is seen coming from Eliot's music-room, obviously agitated. One morning Eliot's body is found hanging from the rafters. Now read on:

AUNT FLORENCE had a wonderful time arranging Jennie's party. She looked up the addresses of all her old friends and checked on information to see which of them had grandchildren or youthful nephews or nieces.

She had always been a methodical chronicler, and it proved no trouble to issue invitations to a dozen or so children who would be sure to come if their mothers were able to bring or send them.

The date was fixed at ten days hence.

"I won't take down the garden swing," Aunt Florence decided. "We'll pray for fine weather. But if it's wet we'll shift the furniture out of the dining-room. You'll have to organise games, Sarah. I'm sure Tim would be very good at helping."

"What makes you think that?" Sarah asked. "He hasn't had anything to do with children for five years."

"One has only to see the way he manages Jennie. He has the knack. If his sister were anything like him, it's a wicked shame she had to die. But with that queer Eliot for a husband maybe it was best. Sarah, I'm still convinced Eliot took my ring that night and Oliver feels he must shield him."

"Perhaps you're right," Sarah agreed. Then she added: "Tim thinks there's more to it than that."

"More to Eliot's suicide?"

"Yes. And Venetia's acting as if there are ghosts in the house."

"Venetia," said Aunt Florence crisply, "is neurotic. I've always said so. But, if Tim thinks there's more to it, he's probably right. I admire that young man's intelligence. No one will fool him."

"Who would want to?" Sarah asked. But Aunt Florence couldn't answer that.

"We haven't time to discuss intangibles now," she said a little impatiently. "We're here to fix Jennie's party. And a splendid one it has to be."

The thought of going shopping had cheered Venetia, but she had been through an intense emotional strain, and it wasn't until the next day that she had enough energy to go out.

However, she came into the schoolroom then dressed in a smart grey suit, with a jaunty little hat to match, and, save for the slight hollows beneath her eyes, looking back to normal.

"Pack your books, Jennie," she said. "I'm taking you shopping. We're going to buy your party dress."

Jennie, although self-controlled, had been almost completely silent for two days, neither hostile nor friendly. But she had showed an inclination for Sarah's company and dogged her footsteps, although she couldn't be induced to look lighthearted.

Now, however, at Venetia's suggestion she came to life and slid excitedly off her chair. Then she looked at Sarah. Sarah nodded, thinking how, ever since Eliot's death, she had been attempting to get Jennie to do or say one spontaneous thing, and now, the party, with its thread of magic, was doing it for her.

How wrong she would have been to let Mrs. Hopkins' forebodings interfere with it when it was the only antidote for the shock that had made Jennie so quiet and unchildlike.

"Wash your face first," she said. "And you'll have to put on your good dress. See how quick you can be."

Jennie was gone less than ten minutes, but in that time Venetia wasn't still a moment. She walked up and down the room, tapped her fingers on the window pane, picked up and put down things, looked at her face in her compact mirror, took off her gloves and then put them on again.

UNABLE to keep still, Venetia chattered all the time about Jennie, about the weather, about how Oliver was absorbed in his play, about how much better all at once she was feeling.

Sarah realised that her gaiety was a reaction and might be only temporary. On the other hand, it might have been that she had allowed herself to be afraid of a bogy that didn't exist.

Anyway, it was a relief to have her normal again, and, besides, by taking Jennie out it would allow Sarah to keep her appointment with Tim.

After Venetia and Jennie had gone, Sarah looked for Tim in the house, but Petunia, dusting in the hall, said he had gone out an hour ago.

The hall door was open and sunlight lay across the steps. Petunia was humming to herself as she worked, and from the direction of the kitchen Sarah could hear the cheerful clattering of dishes. The house was more normal than it had been for some days.

Sarah remarked on this.

"It's the sun," Petunia answered sagely. "First bright day we've had since, well, you know. My Jimmy says I'm better not to talk about it. Forget it, he says. But I did wonder for a while there how I could go on staying in this house."

She added kindly: "You ought to be going out yourself, Miss Stacey. Get a spell away from the house. There's only Mrs. Foster Senior and Mr. Oliver in. Mr. Oliver's working, or he was until Mr. Reid came. They're both in the study now. I suppose he'll be here for lunch. But I'd go while the going's good, if I were you."

Sarah listened to the fat, comfortable sound of the doves in the trees. The amber leaves seemed to color the air, making it all golden. Petunia was right; she should go out and meet Tim and drink the Chianti he had promised her. It might even be fun.

She went to her room and dressed, taking special care about her appearance, because somehow the day challenged her to look her best.

In fifteen minutes she went downstairs again. She had to pass Oliver's study door to go to the kitchen to tell Mrs. Hopkins or Petunia that she would be home before Venetia and Jennie. The door of the study was open now and as she passed she heard Oliver's voice, loud and angry.

This was the more startling because she had never heard Oliver speak angrily before. He had been impatient with Venetia, scathing at times with Eliot, but this was different. It was a plain case of having lost his temper.

"Stop badgering me!" he said, and swore. "Haven't you any understanding? How can I write at this stage?"

"My dear fellow," came Burgess' voice, placating, a little distressed, "I do understand. But you've only got the final scene to do. It's not more than a couple of thousand words. If you could do it—it's so important."

"Well, I can't," Oliver shouted. "I've sat here for two days and not done a line. You think I get words out of thin air! I grope for them and see nothing but Eliot's face. You didn't see that! If you had you'd have some idea of how I feel."

Burgess' voice came again. "You're letting it get you down. Come out for a drink."

"Oh, go away!" Oliver's voice was blurred now, as if he had his head in his hands. "Leave me alone. I've got to get over this in my own way."

"I'm sorry, old man. I do understand. I'll look in again when you're feeling better."

Burgess went out quickly, not noticing Sarah in the hall, and presently the front door banged.

It was odd and uncomfortable the way people in this house seemed to force their noisy quarrels on her. She hadn't wanted to overhear that, but, having done so now, she couldn't go out with the thought of Oliver brooding alone in his study.

Impulsively she went to the door and looked in. Oliver was sitting at his desk with his head buried in his arms. Sarah crossed the room quickly and put her hand on his shoulder.

"You shouldn't let them worry you," she said.

He looked up, his eyes peculiarly lightless.

"They do," he said. "First Venetia: the state she got herself into; and now Burgess about this infernal play. Why did Eliot have to be such a crazy young fool? Why, why, why?"

"I should make them wait for the play until you feel you can write," Sarah said.

"Should you?" He looked up at her. "I believe you would, too. You're a very self-possessed young woman."

"You can't be expected to write in this kind of emotional upheaval."

"No. You understand, don't you? Sometimes I wonder if I'll ever write again."

"That's ridiculous."

"No. The spark, the urge, whatever you like to call it, seems to have left me completely. Perhaps it is ridiculous. Writers get these fits of depression." He smiled at her with his gentle charm. "I'm being a great baby. You're all dressed up."

"Yes. I was going out to lunch."

"Important?"

"N—no." Why didn't she say it was with Tim? She hesitated, and then it was too late.

"What about skipping it and taking me somewhere? I need cheering up."

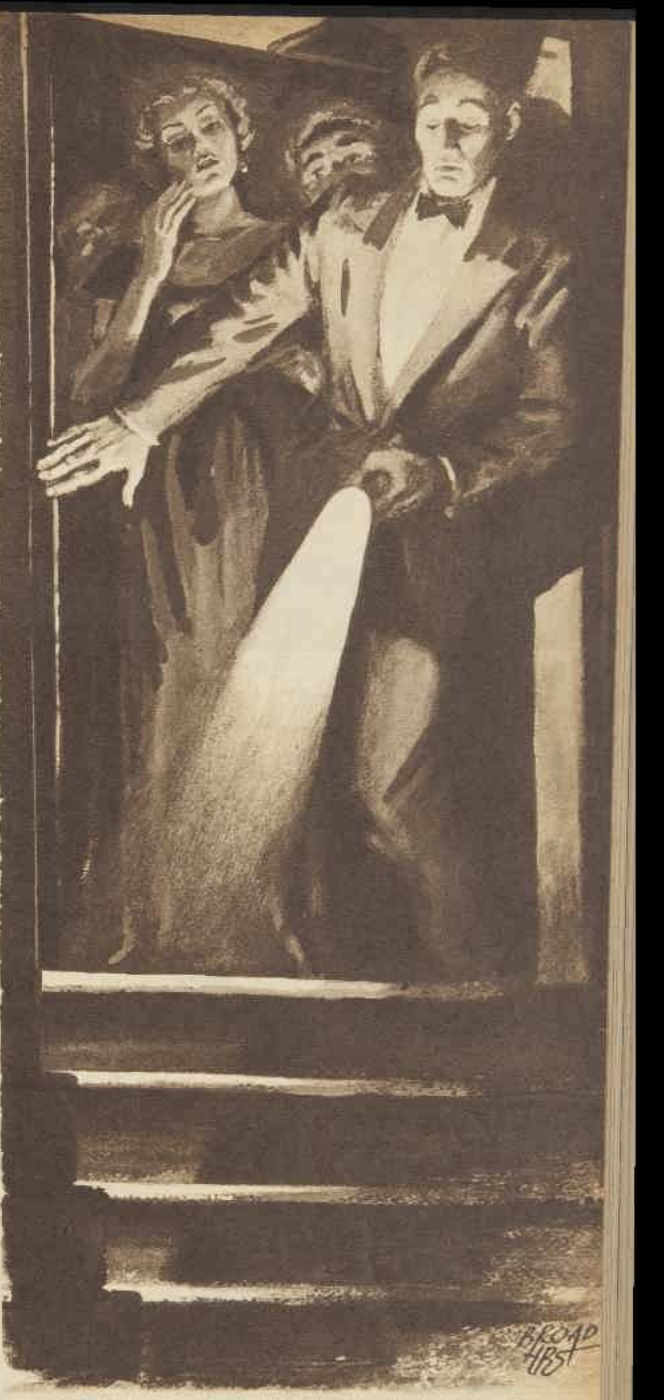
"But——"

"That's an order. Come along."

After all, she decided later, she would tell Tim it was an order and also an opportunity to find out something of the Fosters' past life. Because, over liqueurs which followed a very good white wine, Oliver became expansive.

"How was I to know," he said, "that both Mary and Eliot would die in my house? I thought I was doing them a kindness. They'd lived in that dark old house in Pimlico for long enough."

Please turn to page 6



Tim held everyone back, while he shone his torch down the stairs. "Someone get Dr. Forsythe," he said.

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CHASES DIRT!

D-32

Voice of a Dove

Continued from page 5

SARAH said nothing, and Oliver went on, as though trying to convince himself, "I know how glad I was to get away from that house. One couldn't work there: it was damp and depressing. Besides, I thought Mary would be company for Venetia."

"Was this just after your marriage?" Sarah asked quietly.

"Yes. Shortly after. I was tramping the West End trying to get someone to take my play. But Venetia had a little money. The house is hers, you know." He met Sarah's involuntary gaze quizzically.

"No, I didn't intend living on my wife. We had agreed I should have a year to really find out whether my plays were any good or not. If not, then I went back to the insurance company where I'd worked before. Fortunately, I didn't have to do that."

He began to smile reminiscently, his peculiar naive pleasure back in his face.

"You've never heard the cry of 'Author' in a theatre and had to go on the stage and bow to hundreds of applauding people. It's something you can't understand unless you've experienced it. I still feel like a child staring at his first Christmas tree when I think about it. It's like a fanfare of trumpets."

He added whimsically: "As my mother told you, I was rather a duffer at other things. Eliot got all the plums at school. But this thing was mine, standing up there bowing, listening to all that applause, feeling one's power over a multitude. I tell you, it's like being God."

The glow in his eyes didn't come from the wine he had drunk, Sarah knew, but from reminiscent excitement. She wondered if all playwrights had this exaggerated sense of their greatness and power. She was sorry to destroy his exalted mood, but there was something she wanted to ask him.

"So you left the house in Pimlico?"

"Yes. Mother shifted, too, and we found some reliable tenants."

"Bless this happy home!" echoed in some far corner of Sarah's mind. Suddenly and irrationally she seemed to see Tim standing impatiently beneath Eros, tall above the crowd, watching with his keen, narrowed eyes as the traffic went by.

She knew that Oliver was lying, because she knew that no tenants had gone up and down the dark stairs or looked at the renovated air-raid shelter or listened to the doves. But why should Oliver lie about it? She was aware of his eyes on her, too closely.

"You're very attractive, Sarah."

She didn't know what to say. She wondered with apprehension if he were going to make love to her.

"Let's have fun, Sarah. Don't let's go on being gloomy. Burgess came this morning to tell me 'Meadowsweet' finishes next week. Let's make it go out with a bang. I'll arrange a party." Then he stopped uncertainly. "Would it be all right so soon?"

He looked too eager to be disappointed.

"I should think not too large a one would be perfectly all right. After all, it is an event."

"That's the spirit, Sarah. Come along, my dear. I feel a new man. You're good for me."

Venetia and Jennie weren't home when Sarah and Oliver returned, but they came soon after. Venetia looked a great deal better. There was color in her cheeks and her face was full of excitement.

Jennie, on the other hand, wore her most forbidding expression, her arched black brows drawn into a frown over the bridge of her nose. She was carrying a box obviously containing her new dress, and Sarah's first thought was that she must be disappointed with it.

As soon as she came in she left Venetia's side and came over to Sarah, putting her hand into Sarah's.

Venetia was carrying a mink scarf over her arm. Sarah hadn't noticed her with it when she went out.

"We got Jennie's dress," she said. "Don't scold, Oliver. It's the first party dress she's ever had and it's lovely. Isn't it, darling?"

Jennie said, "Yes," in a small voice, and Sarah felt her cold fingers grip tighter.

"It's white tulle with pink rosebuds," Venetia went on. "And we had to buy petticoats as well. Two, to make the skirt stand out. Open the box and show them to Sarah, Jennie."

Oliver touched the mink scarf on Venetia's arm.

"And what's this, darling?"

Venetia turned to him radiantly. Where, Sarah wondered, was the frightened girl of yesterday and the day before? She was acting as if she had been stimulated by some very potent drug.

"Oh, Oliver, I just had to buy that. It looks gorgeous on. See."

She flung it round her shoulders and pivoted slowly. It was true that it looked well. She looked rich and pampered and luxurious.

"And, after all, you've never bought me a mink coat, so surely I can have one small scarf."

"Where did you get it?"

"In Oxford Street. I honestly don't remember the name of the shop. Jennie and I just wandered in. Didn't we, Jennie? But isn't it a darling fur?" She rubbed her cheek sensually against the fine skins.

Sarah wondered, for a moment, when she had seen that bemused look in her eyes before, then remembered it was when she had put on the diamond earrings Oliver had given her.

Oliver, who had looked interested and benevolent all the time, put out his hand and lifted the fur from round her neck.

"Try to remember the name of the shop," he said. "If you can't, you'll have to come with me and point it out."

Venetia looked at him questioningly. Already her eyes were dilating in swift alarm.

"Why, Oliver?"

He stooped and kissed her lightly on the forehead.

"Because, my dear, extravagant wife, we can't afford mink scarves at the present time. I'm dreadfully sorry. But it was naughty of you to buy it without saying anything."

"You mean — I have to take it back?"

Oliver nodded. "I'll come with you."

"But you've bought me other extravagant things. How was I to know——"

"Of course you weren't to know. It just happens we've been a little careless. Money doesn't last forever. Now, for a while, we must take care. Isn't that sensible, Sarah?"

"But your plays, Oliver," Venetia said hesitatingly. "I thought——"

"One finishes next week and the other isn't completed. You know it isn't completed, don't you? And you know that the last scene can be much the most difficult to write?"

And then, although his voice hadn't changed from its gentle blandness, Venetia's expression quite plainly showed fear. For a split second something significant passed between them, some thought or knowledge Sarah couldn't understand. Or had she imagined it?

At least she didn't imagine Venetia twisting her hands in the old tortured way and making no protest at all when Oliver folded the scarf and put it carefully on the table.

Oddly enough, it was Jennie who began to cry. She did so in a breathless, half-hysterical way, her fingers clutching at Sarah's.

"What's the matter with her?" Oliver asked.

"She must be over-tired," Sarah said. "Too much excitement, I expect. I'll take her upstairs. Come along, Jennie. When you've had tea we'll try your new dress on. I'm sure it's perfectly lovely."

She was glad to escape herself from that uncomfortable scene. How foolish and extravagant Venetia was, especially at this time when Oliver was worried about his inability to work.

All the same, although her sympathies were with him, she retained a fleeting feeling of regret for the so final end to Venetia's excitement.

Jennie refused to eat any tea. She stopped crying, but she showed no desire to talk, even when Sarah opened the box and shook out the lovely, delicate dress with its fairy skirt and pattern of pale pink rosebuds.

"Why, this might belong to a princess," she said. "It's the prettiest dress any little girl ever had. I'll do your hair in curls for the party and you won't know yourself."

"I don't want to be pretty," Jennie said in a prickly voice. "I'd rather be ugly. Bad things don't happen to ugly people."

"Why do you say that?" Sarah asked in surprise. "Has Aunt Venetia been telling you stories?"

But at that Jennie would say no more at all. She got Baby Robert out of the cupboard and sat nursing him, his wooden head against her flat breast. Her eyes were expressionless. She looked like a small sphinx.

TIM didn't come home for dinner. Sarah was disappointed, because she wanted to tell him how Venetia, after having recovered, had got frightened of something again. She also meant to apologise for having missed her lunch appointment, but, of course, he would understand.

He came in at ten o'clock, just as old Mrs. Foster was folding up her knitting and preparing, with noisy yawns, to go up to bed.

Oliver had spent the evening playing short, jerky tunes at the piano, with a determination to be light-hearted that was a little pathetic. Venetia gazed into the fire and did nothing at all except occasionally draw her hands across her breast as if she felt a cold draught.

Tim came over to Sarah.

"The next time we make an appointment to meet," he said pleasantly, "let's make it Trafalgar Square. Then at least I can while away time by feeding the pigeons."

"Oh, Tim, I'm so sorry. I did mean to come, but Oliver——"

Tim waved his hand.

"I don't want any excuses. You didn't come, that's all. Let's put off this date now until you ask me. I know the chances of your doing that are improbable, but I prefer to leave it that way."

Sarah had a slight, unreasonable feeling of chill. She had expected Tim to show indignation, reproach, anything but this cheerful inconsequence. Well, if that was as much as he cared about the matter they would never eat together.

"Let's forget about it altogether," she said shortly.

"Ah, no. We won't do that. You may even enjoy my company more than Oliver's one day. If you live long enough!"

Any underlying grimness there may have been intended in his last sentence was discounted by his mocking smile.

Only one more thing happened that night. Jennie had a nightmare and woke screaming, "Don't! Don't do it!"

When Sarah went in to her, her eyes were wide open and glazed with terror. It was quite five minutes before she could bring her back to consciousness and another half-hour before she went back to sleep. But she would make no explanation about her dream.

"I don't remember. I don't know why I cried," was all she would say.

Cuddling the thin, nervous little body in her arms, Sarah had a feeling of desolation herself. It was the late hour, being woken suddenly from sleep, thinking how quiet the attic was. This house was getting on her nerves. And who was to comfort her if she cried?

Sarah observed Venetia closely the following week, but, though inclined to be jumpy and nervous, she seemed to have a hold on herself, as if she were determined not to let things get her down, or, more significantly, not to believe something.

Then Petunia came out with the announcement that Venetia had begun locking her door at nights and that Mr. Oliver was sleeping in the dressing-room.

"I know, because when I take up the tea in the mornings I can't get in, and it isn't till she knows it's me that she comes and opens the door. Then she looks kind of nervous, as if it might be burglars."

"And Mr. Oliver?" Sarah couldn't help asking.

"He don't take morning tea, so I don't see him till he comes down to breakfast. I must say he looks all right then."

Sarah could confirm that. In fact, for the past two or three days Oliver had seemed to slough his low spirits and become his old, genial, happy self.

"My Jimmy says I shouldn't work here," Petunia said suddenly. "He says there's too many queer goings on. He says next thing we'll all be dead in our beds."

Mrs. Hopkins turned on her angrily.

"Now, isn't that just the sort of nonsense your Jimmy would talk. Just because poor Mrs. Eliot died having her baby and Mr. Eliot couldn't stand the loneliness no longer."

"Well, you said yourself about what you've seen in your teacup," Petunia protested.

"That was Mr. Eliot's death. It was there quite clear and it happened."

"But there was something about Jennie's party."

Mrs. Hopkins scowled irritatedly.

"Oh, that was just fancy. Now the party isn't here it will be all right. Won't it, Miss Stacey?"

Sarah didn't like the slight beseeching note in Mrs. Hopkins' voice. It made her uneasy, because it showed Mrs. Hopkins, for all her bravado, was not happy about the party.

"Of course it will," she said reassuringly. "What could happen at Aunt Florence's place?"

"Indeed, yes. Your aunt is a fine woman. You're both being wonderful to that poor little orphaned child. To tell the truth, I only stay here myself because of her. Someone has to keep the place going for Jennie's sake."

"Otherwise, you'd leave?" Sarah asked.

Mrs. Hopkins nodded.

"Now there's this party Mr. Oliver's planning. I don't mind the extra work, but the last one he had there was that queer business about your aunt's ring and the dinner was spoilt. I said to him when he mentioned this new party, 'Yes, I'll do the cooking, I don't mind, but not turkey. I can't look turkey in the face again'."

"Mrs. Hopkins," said Petunia eagerly, "do read your cup about this party. Do!"

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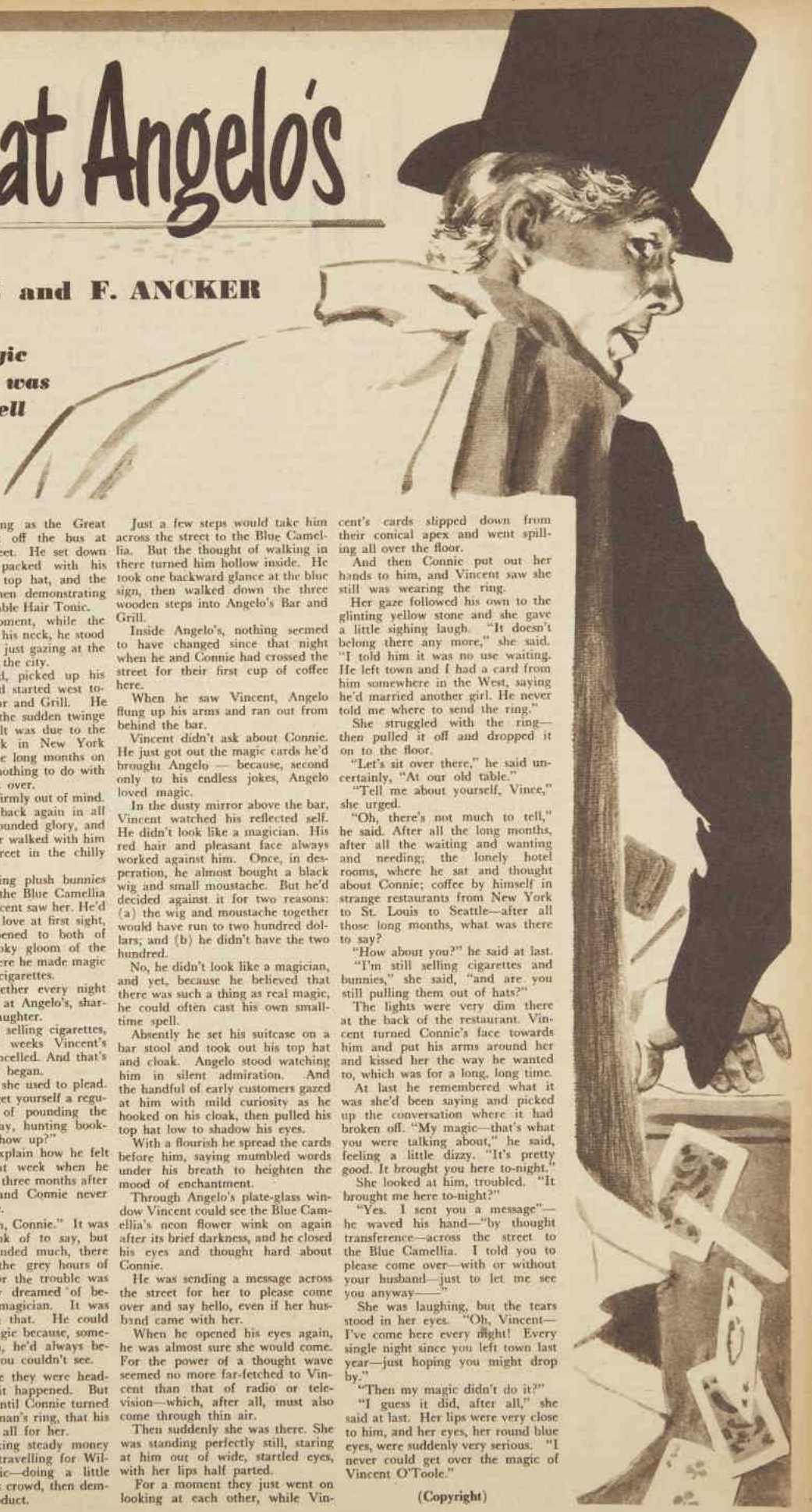
Magic at Angelo's

By C. HOPE and F. ANCKER

Because he believed magic was a real thing, he was able to cast his own spell



IT was raining as the Great Vincent got off the bus at Twelfth Street. He set down his suitcase, still packed with his magician's cloak, top hat, and the wand he used when demonstrating Wilmer's Remarkable Hair Tonic.

And for a moment, while the rain poured down his neck, he stood in the gusty night just gazing at the twinkling lights of the city.

Then he sighed, picked up his suitcase again, and started west towards Angelo's Bar and Grill. He told himself that the sudden twinge of nostalgia he felt was due to the fact he was back in New York again, after all the long months on the road. It had nothing to do with Connie. That was over.

He put Connie firmly out of mind. She came firmly back again in all her blonde and rounded glory, and the memory of her walked with him along Twelfth Street in the chilly October night.

She'd been selling plush bunnies and cigarettes in the Blue Camellia the first night Vincent saw her. He'd never believed in love at first sight, but it had happened to both of them—in the smoky gloom of the Blue Camellia where he made magic and Connie sold cigarettes.

They were together every night after that—coffee at Angelo's, sharing dreams and laughter.

Connie kept on selling cigarettes, but after a few weeks Vincent's magic act was cancelled. And that's when the trouble began.

"Look, Vince," she used to plead. "Why don't you get yourself a regular job, instead of pounding the city streets all day, hunting bookings that never show up?"

He'd tried to explain how he felt about magic—that week when he was laid off; then three months after that, when he and Connie never laughed any more.

"I'm a magician, Connie." It was all he could think of to say, but it never had sounded much, there at Angelo's in the grey hours of the morning. For the trouble was that he not only dreamed of becoming a great magician. It was even deeper than that. He could never give up magic because, somewhere inside him, he'd always believed in things you couldn't see.

He knew where they were heading even before it happened. But he didn't know, until Connie turned up with another man's ring, that his dreams had been all for her.

He'd been making steady money for a year now, travelling for Wilmer's Hair Tonic—doing a little magic to draw his crowd, then demonstrating the product.

Just a few steps would take him across the street to the Blue Camellia. But the thought of walking in there turned him hollow inside. He took one backward glance at the blue sign, then walked down the three wooden steps into Angelo's Bar and Grill.

Inside Angelo's, nothing seemed to have changed since that night when he and Connie had crossed the street for their first cup of coffee here.

When he saw Vincent, Angelo flung up his arms and ran out from behind the bar.

Vincent didn't ask about Connie. He just got out the magic cards he'd brought Angelo — because, second only to his endless jokes, Angelo loved magic.

In the dusty mirror above the bar, Vincent watched his reflected self. He didn't look like a magician. His red hair and pleasant face always worked against him. Once, in desperation, he almost bought a black wig and small moustache. But he'd decided against it for two reasons: (a) the wig and moustache together would have run to two hundred dollars; and (b) he didn't have the two hundred.

No, he didn't look like a magician, and yet, because he believed that there was such a thing as real magic, he could often cast his own small-time spell.

Absently he set his suitcase on a bar stool and took out his top hat and cloak. Angelo stood watching him in silent admiration. And the handful of early customers gazed at him with mild curiosity as he hooked on his cloak, then pulled his top hat low to shadow his eyes.

With a flourish he spread the cards before him, saying mumbled words under his breath to heighten the mood of enchantment.

Through Angelo's plate-glass window Vincent could see the Blue Camellia's neon flower wink on again after its brief darkness, and he closed his eyes and thought hard about Connie.

He was sending a message across the street for her to please come over and say hello, even if her husband came with her.

When he opened his eyes again, he was almost sure she would come. For the power of a thought wave seemed no more far-fetched to Vincent than that of radio or television—which, after all, must also come through thin air.

Then suddenly she was there. She was standing perfectly still, staring at him out of wide, startled eyes, with her lips half parted.

For a moment they just went on looking at each other, while Vincent's cards slipped down from their conical apex and went spilling all over the floor.

And then Connie put out her hands to him, and Vincent saw she still was wearing the ring.

Her gaze followed his own to the glinting yellow stone and she gave a little sighing laugh. "It doesn't belong there any more," she said. "I told him it was no use waiting. He left town and I had a card from him somewhere in the West, saying he'd married another girl. He never told me where to send the ring."

She struggled with the ring—then pulled it off and dropped it on to the floor.

"Let's sit over there," he said uncertainly, "At our old table."

"Tell me about yourself, Vince," she urged.

"Oh, there's not much to tell," he said. After all the long months, after all the waiting and wanting and needing; the lonely hotel rooms, where he sat and thought about Connie; coffee by himself in strange restaurants from New York to St. Louis to Seattle—after all those long months, what was there to say?

"How about you?" he said at last.

"I'm still selling cigarettes and bunnies," she said, "and are you still pulling them out of hats?"

The lights were very dim there at the back of the restaurant. Vincent turned Connie's face towards him and put his arms around her and kissed her the way he wanted to, which was for a long, long time.

At last he remembered what it was she'd been saying and picked up the conversation where it had broken off. "My magic—that's what you were talking about," he said, feeling a little dizzy. "It's pretty good. It brought you here to-night."

She looked at him, troubled. "It brought me here to-night?"

"Yes. I sent you a message"—he waved his hand—"by thought transference—across the street to the Blue Camellia. I told you to please come over—with or without your husband—just to let me see you anyway——"

She was laughing, but the tears stood in her eyes. "Oh, Vincent—I've come here every night! Every single night since you left town last year—just hoping you might drop by."

"Then my magic didn't do it?"

"I guess it did, after all," she said at last. Her lips were very close to him, and her eyes, her round blue eyes, were suddenly very serious. "I never could get over the magic of Vincent O'Toole."

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Tom, Dick, or Harry mightn't mind being nagged, but Alistair did because he happened to be . . .

A certain type of Man

By RUTH LYONS

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN MILLS

HE never knew what time she would arrive. If their appointment was for six she was apt to turn up at any time between five thirty and six thirty. Once she had come almost an hour early, while he was having a bath, and she had waited patiently outside the door until he finally heard her ring.

He had been embarrassed and profusely apologetic, but she had said in her soft, gentle way, "I didn't mind. I could hear the bath running, so I just waited." No word about why she had come so early.

As he grew to know her better he realised she was inclined to be vague about time, and, since she was so understanding of the small lapses of others, how could he mind?

She lived in a suburb south of London, with her parents, and as she had a job in the city in the same building where he worked (which was how they had met) they had got into the habit of meeting at his flat.

He had been hesitant at first about asking her to come to his bachelor quarters, but after a few experiences of waiting for her in the benchless entrance to their office building he had asked her if she would object to meeting him at his place.

She had said mildly, "Why should I?" And he had thought that either she was very wise to treat the matter so casually or very naive—he didn't know which.

There were a lot of things he didn't know about her, and this particular Saturday afternoon as he waited for her he gave his mind to trying to fathom her.

He didn't know what she thought of him beyond the fact that she seemed to like being with him. And he didn't know whether that was cleverness on her part in keeping him guessing, or merely the fact that her feeling went no deeper than a friendly liking.

He had spent a good deal of his time thinking of her, ever since the first day, about three weeks ago, when he had made her acquaintance in the classic manner of bumping into her in the corridor of their office building.

He had begged her pardon and she had laughed, and she had been so sweet and looked so pretty with her fair hair flying about a little untidily (he had known then what was meant by "charming disarray") that he had ended by asking her to lunch. She had said, without the hesitation that most girls would consider seemly, "Why, that would be nice."

The doorbell rang, and with his thoughts full of Julia he went to answer it, wondering if this time he should take her in his arms, making it light so it wouldn't startle or offend her, kissing her on the tip of her little nose, perhaps, and saying something silly like, "Nice to have you aboard."

He opened the door and at the sight of the neat brown-haired girl standing there he could not control the dulling of eyes and smile. He made a quick recovery and said heartily, "Why, Pauline! Hello. Do come in. Nice to have you aboard." Then remembered too late that the remark hadn't been intended for her.

What he had feared had finally happened. How was he to get rid of Pauline Morley before Julia arrived?

Not that there was any reason for him to have this guilty feeling about Pauline. True, he had taken her out now and then and she had been a wonderful neighbor and fun to be with, but he hadn't exactly led her on. Or had he?

There had been the night when they had sat up until after midnight in her flat, with the fire crackling and warming the unseasonably cold spring night air, with her cat dozing in his lap, and they had talked in the unhurried intimate way of two people who have suddenly grown to know each other very well. Before he left he had kissed her. And liked it.

But it was the next day that he had bumped into Julia, and (admit it, he said to himself) he had been avoiding Pauline ever since. The reason he felt uneasy about her now was the almost formless fear that she might do something to spoil him for Julia.

His affair with Julia was so fragile, so tenuous, he was afraid some action, some word of Pauline's in her cool, crisp, forthright way might shatter it completely.

She used to knock on his door at odd hours, and he on hers, but in the three weeks since that night by the fire she had kept to herself. He had had moments when he had expected to run into her in the hall when he was with Julia, but so far he had been spared that.

She said, "Are you busy? If so, I'll run along. I just realised I've been neglecting my neighborly duties shamefully and thought I'd drop in and see how our plants are getting along. I've brought some plant food for them, too."

He said, "Fine. I have a—an engagement later, but——"

Pauline went to the wide window with the broad sill where the plants were spread out; he noticed that she was carrying her copper watering-can with the long, thin spout, and he realised that he hadn't really looked at the plants for quite a while.

They were an odd assortment that she had got together for him, cuttings from some of her plants, others she had bought for him, and some that he had purchased himself.

He had said to her, "But you have green fingers; I can't do anything with them, my fingers are only a pale chartreuse." So she had taken upon herself the task of caring for his plants.

They lived in a quiet, well-kept old house remodelled to make small flats; his and Pauline's were on the same floor, differing only in the fact that his was at the back and hers in the front.

He hadn't bothered much with his place until he had met Pauline. She had coolly and firmly told him to do this and that to make it more home-like, and had made the curtains and cushion-covers herself.

At the time he had welcomed it, but now with Julia almost within his arms these gestures irked him.

She said, "Oh, really, Alistair, how awful! What have you been doing to the poor things? Or rather, not doing? When did you water them last?"

"I don't know; frankly I've been a little busy lately."

She kept her back to him, busily pulling off dead leaves, loosening the soil in the pots, running back and forth to the kitchen to get water.

She said, "Well, really it's quite simple to take care of them if you just put your mind to it."

Suddenly he was back in his youth again, hearing his mother say to his father, "I don't know why you can't hang up your things, why you must make such a litter always, George. It's quite simple to be neat if you just put your mind to it." He could see the exasperated look on his father's face and remember how sorry he used to feel for him.

Pauline turned finally and faced him, and he hardened himself against her, resenting her with a remembered kind of resentment from the past that was partly for his father and partly for himself.

She was small and pretty in a neat, cool way, with large, dark eyes of a disconcerting directness. She said, "I suppose you've been too busy yearning over that girl I've seen you with."

So she had seen them. Of course, why not, with her flat in the front of the house?

He said, "Pauline, I have met a girl I like very much. She's sweet and gentle—I don't know how to describe her. You could probably destroy her, or destroy us, with a few of your simple, well-sharpened phrases. But please don't do it."

She was silent for a moment, holding his eyes with her own and there was absolutely no expression on her face. Then she laughed and said, "Really, Alistair, I didn't know you thought so badly of me. I suppose the next thing you'll be telling me is that I'm too nice a girl to be wasting my time mooning over a man who doesn't want me."

His anger was rising, but he tried to keep his voice reasonable. "I didn't know you were mooning over me," he replied, "and I don't think you are. I think you're enjoying making me feel uncomfortable."

She was still expressionless, still holding him with her large, bright, unwavering eyes. "No, I don't enjoy making you uncomfortable at all. I would enjoy very much making you as comfortable as I could."

His eyes dropped before her steady gaze. "I'm sorry, Pauline. I know you mean that. I know you would. I do appreciate it, but . . ."

She smiled. "But. The inevitable but. 'But I don't want it.'"

The doorbell rang and he knew it must be Julia this time. He looked at Pauline pleadingly, and she smiled and said, "I just want to meet her, Alistair. That's all."

He went to the door, feeling like a fool, and thought of his high hopes of taking Julia into his arms, kissing the tip of her nose, saying his silly words. It all seemed so feeble-minded to him now that when he opened the door he found himself saying flatly, "Hello, Julia."

She didn't seem to notice any change in his attitude. She said in her warm way, "Hello, Alistair," and came in with a faint whiff of perfume and fresh air. Her friendly eyes found Pauline and didn't change their expression a fraction.

He introduced them, "Miss Morley, Miss Shane. Julia, this is the girl who has the flat opposite mine and who's helped me no end fixing up my hovel. She is the custodian of my plants among other things—my poor plants that seem to be dying from neglect at present."

"Oh, I never can do a thing with plants, either," Julia said. He felt suddenly protective towards her.

Pauline smiled. "So many people say that. It's simply because they don't want to bother with them. Plants need care and attention, too."

Julia glanced over at the broad window-sill. "I suppose you're right. Oh, aren't you two lucky having flats of your own and living here in London? Do you live alone, too, Miss Morley? I wish I could. Although, I don't know. . . . It's a nuisance coming into town every day, but it's nice in the summer, and it's nice being at home, too. I suppose I sound silly, really."

Alistair said, "No you sound sweet." Then he saw Pauline's eyes on him and felt his face grow hot. But she wasn't as cool and self-assured as she had been before Julia came in. And she was regarding Julia with a look that was a little questioning, as if Julia had turned out to be something she had not expected.

"Well, I've got to run along," she said. "It was nice meeting you, Miss Shane. You and Alistair must come and see my flat some time."

When the door closed after her, Julia said, "She's nice, isn't she, Alistair? I like her."

He thought: Now why in the world would you like her? And he said, "You know, you really are an amazing girl."

They had dinner and then went to a show. Then he put her on her train, and they had their usual small argument about it.

"I don't feel right letting you go home alone."

"But it's silly for you to come with me. You'd have to wait half an hour for a train back. When I get there I'm home in ten minutes. Anyway, you're coming out tomorrow and I don't want you to get tired of the place before you've even seen our house."

Just before the train pulled out he put his arms round her and kissed her on the cheek. He didn't know whether he aimed for her nose or her lips, but it landed on her cheek that smelled faintly of something sweet.

She said, "You're nice, Alistair. I like you."

He said, "I like you, too, Julia. I like you [illegible]-much." He stood on the platform for a minute or so after the train had left, then he drew a deep breath and went home.

The second-floor landing was quiet and his heels made a noise on the polished wood, so that when Pauline's door opened he realised she must have been waiting for his return.

He was a little annoyed with her for waylaying him—he wanted only to get back to his flat and think pleasantly and long of Julia.

She said, "I'm sorry, Alistair, for the way I behaved this afternoon. I know I've no right to be concerned about you, or annoyed with you, or—even catty, I suppose you'd call it."

She was wearing a red housecoat with a wide sailor collar and she looked very pretty in it. Behind her was the mellow-lighted attractiveness of her flat, the fireplace now filled with her shiny-leaved plants, and her wide window-ledge trailing a healthy tangle of leaves and blossoms.

She seemed very much in control of herself now, with an air of friendliness and companionship about her, and he found himself suddenly wishing she would ask him in for a cup of tea and a chat.

He said, smiling, "Please, Pauline, don't apologise. You have every right to say anything you want to me. Particularly after the way I—well, would you say 'led you on'?"

Her face flushed and her eyes became very bright. He didn't know whether it was anger or possible tears. "I certainly would not!" she exclaimed. "If you think I'm fool enough to be upset because of a kiss or two——"

She stopped suddenly, and the anger went out of her face, and she laughed. "Oh, forget it, Alistair. Your girl is very pretty and seems awfully nice. Good luck."

The door closed in his face and he was left out on the silent landing knowing again that sense of irritation with her because she should leave him so abruptly and deflated.

What a woman! What a woman to stay away from if you wanted any peace of mind, he thought.

He was to take a train at midday, Julia had told him, and while he was shaving and dressing the next morning he wondered how she ever made trains on time, with her complete lack of time sense. Probably someone put her on the train at the

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They were both in his thoughts, but if he wanted peace of mind he must immediately forget one.

other end, and usually he put her on the train at this end.

She met him at the station in an ancient and battered car.

She said, "Dad doesn't usually trust me with this old crate, he's afraid it will fall apart all over me, or vice versa, but I couldn't remember what train I'd told you, so I thought it was only fair that I should do the waiting. I've been here over an hour. It was nice though."

He groaned, "Oh, my lovely Julia, how do you know when it's time to go to bed and when to get up?"

She laughed up at him as he got in beside her. "I'm just lucky, I suppose."

The house was a small wooden bungalow that was in need of painting, and the garden was just a garden, with a rather unkempt lawn that was being mown by a short, thin man in a white shirt with rolled-up sleeves.

Alistair thought of his own home, with its smooth lawn and his mother's carefully tended flower-beds. He remembered how sorry he used to be for his father when his mother nagged at him to work in the garden.

Julia smiled up at him happily, then turned towards her father. "Dad, this is Alistair. And what on earth made you decide to mow the lawn to-day?"

Mr. Shane shook hands and started to pull down his sleeves, shaking his head a little and smiling, and Alistair wondered what it was about the man that made him seem pathetic.

Mr. Shane said: "I don't know why I bother trying to make this lawn look like anything. It never does. We planted a lot of flowers in the borders one year, but none of us seems to have green fingers."

Alistair found himself wanting to say, "It's really not too hard if you put your mind to it," then he thought in sudden surprise: They've almost got me saying it now.

So, instead, he said heartily: "I don't know why people feel they have to have gardens. It's a lot of thankless labor, I think."

Julia's father said, "I like a garden, though," and led the way into the house.

The living-room looked the way Alistair's bachelor quarters usually looked on Sunday, with newspapers strewn round, overflowing ash-trays, a cup and saucer here and there with the dregs of coffee still in them.

He thought with an inward smile: This should make me feel very much at home, and wondered why it didn't.

Julia said: "Oh, Mother, this is Alistair," and he turned to meet Mrs. Shane. She was a pretty, sweet-looking woman, without a line in her face; a little plump, but not too much.

"I'm so glad you were able to come," she said. "Now just sit down and make yourself comfortable."

Julia said: "I suppose I should tidy the room since everybody seems so energetic to-day, with Dad even starting to mow the lawn."

"Oh, was that you, Jim?" exclaimed Mrs. Shane. "I thought it was the people next door. Why on earth did you bother with it to-day?"

Mr. Shane gave Alistair a rueful smile. "Well, I tried."

Alistair thought with a kind of awed wonder: What wonderful and unusual women, these Shanes. Not only do they not nag the man of the family to mow the lawn, they think him a little goofy when he does.

Mrs. Shane served a hearty meal, and there was no question of best china the way his mother always did it. Alistair thought what a strange man Mr. Shane was not to look happier than he did.

Alistair insisted on helping Julia and her mother with the dishes and then they went back into the living-room and Mrs. Shane turned on the wireless, but not too loud.

Julia lit a cigarette. "Oh, Alistair, I meant to tell you. I might give up my job in the city. Dad says there's an opening for me in his firm. He works for the Dryden Company, you know. He and Mother think it would be more sensible for me to work near home."

There was no sign of regret on her face, no concern one way or the other. Again he wondered: Is she being clever or doesn't it mean anything to her that she wouldn't be seeing me every day?

Mrs. Shane was looking at him with an expression that he could only think of as calculating, in a lazy sort of way. She's wondering perhaps if this will make me pop the question, he thought, but she doesn't really care one way or the other.

Suddenly he felt he wanted to get away so that he could think things out without the disturbing presence of Julia and her mother.

He made a great show of looking at his watch. "Is it six o'clock already? I'd better be looking up a train or bus to get back. I have some work to do to-night." Then, all at once, feeling ungrateful and ill-mannered, he said to Julia: "Unless you feel like going somewhere this evening, Julia. The work isn't so very urgent."

ALISTAIR didn't realise until she spoke that he was holding his breath, waiting for her to answer, and he couldn't understand why, as if some momentous question were to be settled by her reply.

All she said, with her sweet smile, was: "No, I don't particularly want to go anywhere, Alistair. But you'd better ring up the station yourself because I'm sure to get mixed up and pick a weekday train."

All the way back in the stuffy carriage he tried to think it out. Was she being very subtle or didn't she care for him enough to be interested?

He went over it all from the beginning, and when he got off the train his head was aching in a small, nasty way and still he did not know the answer.

The old house looked quiet and safely familiar, with its one little tree in tender new leaf under the street lamp. He stood for a while on the pavement, looking at the house, not really seeing it but feeling it inside him as something known and solid, and he noticed that the windows of Pauline's flat were lighted.

He got out his key and opened the door and went slowly up the stairs and knocked at Pauline's door. She was wearing slacks and a white jersey. She looked a little tired, but she managed a small smile.

"What's the matter?" he said. "Are you annoyed because I knocked?"

She said with sarcasm heavy in her voice, "No, certainly not. I'm always delighted to see an old friend. What is it you want—my advice, my help, or would you simply like to discuss your developing love life?"

He smiled down at her. "Why, I didn't know you cared." And when she glared at him, he said: "Aren't you going to ask me in?"

"Why, certainly, come in, enter." She made a little bow.

When the door closed behind him he stood for a moment looking at the room, finding it pleasant and easeful.

The newspapers were on the floor by the couch where she had been reading them, but they had a friendly, uncluttered look.

It was a room that had the casualness of Sunday at home and yet it was neat and tidy, too. He thought with a little surprise that there was a certain restfulness in an orderly place, and he remembered his home and how happy, on the whole, life there had been.

Pauline said, "Your tie's crooked. I don't understand why men always seem to have such difficulty with their ties. It's really quite simple to keep a tie straight if you put your mind to it."

He turned on her angrily. "You sound just like my mother! She's forever nagging my father about being neat, and she used to use, and I suppose still does, that same irritating expression—'it's no trouble if you put your mind to it.'"

Pauline laughed. "It is a stupid thing to say, isn't it? Sit down, Alistair, and cool off. Would you like a tall, cold drink or a short, hot one?"

He said: "You're a very annoying person. But I'll tell you one thing—a man can always tell where he stands with you. That's the way my mother is, too."

She gave him a long, unblinking stare, and then she said: "Tell me, does your father love your mother?"

The question startled him, and he said almost angrily, "Certainly he loves her. He adores her, in fact. We all do."

"Is he happy?"

"Certainly he's happy. Why shouldn't he be? She's a wonderful woman, my mother is."

"But I thought you said she was forever nagging at him?"

He gave her a wary look, not quite knowing what she was leading up to. Then he forgot his own problem for a moment and thought about his father and mother.

"He never seemed to mind it as much as I did, as a matter of fact," he replied.

"Of course he didn't," Pauline answered. "He knew it was because she cared for him. When you really love someone, you want him always to be at his best."

Please turn to page 47

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Unfinished Marriage

By LILIAN CHISHOLM

ILLUSTRATED BY BOOTHROYD

"I expected to see you looking like a devil," Jean said, waving her hands descriptively.

HE sat at the corner table as arranged, waiting for her, and, just as he had expected, she was late. Marian, who had never been punctual for an appointment in her life, could scarcely be expected to encourage anyone else to be on time.

He wondered, idly, what the girl would be like if she came. He'd wait another five minutes—not a second more. Jean must learn, just as Marian had done, that he couldn't wait for any woman. If they wanted to see him, they must be punctual.

He jabbed his half-smoked cigarette into the ashtray and reached for his hat, just as Jean finally came in.

He knew her at once, although he had had secret doubts that he would. The clock might easily have swung back through time to show him Marian as he had first known her. When she came towards him, unhesitatingly, he felt absurdly pleased.

"Sit down, Jean," he said awkwardly, wondering why this meeting, which should be so simple, was making him feel almost gauche. He was so used to being master of any situation that the sudden change made him feel nervous.

She was pouting slightly, her eyes fixed on his head.

"Anything wrong?" he asked.

"It was just that I expected to see you looking like a devil." She waved her hands descriptively. "You know, just the smallest pair of wicked-looking horns, curling towards the ends."

"On the contrary," he told her, trying to enter into her light-toned mood, "I have, safely tucked away beneath this well-cut suit, the cutest pair of soft, downy wings! Jean"—his smile was uncertain—"don't be disappointed——"

Her eyes sobered in the disconcerting way that Marian's eyes had done long ago.

"It's all right," she said quietly. "I want to talk to you. You see, I want your advice about getting married."

"Look, my dear, I'm sorry," he said. "I can give you advice about any shares you want to sell or buy. I can tell you what the well-dressed man about town is wearing, provided he has the money. I can even tell you—"

"I'm not joking," she told him. "This is serious. After all, you are my father, aren't you?"

"No doubt about that," he agreed, clutching desperately at his last chance of flippancy. "But, Jean, why on earth come to me? I mean, you scarcely know me."

"But that is just why," she explained slowly. "I want to get an outsider's point of view on marriage."

"Are you afraid, Jean, that you won't make a success of marriage?"

"Wouldn't you be, in my place?" she asked simply.

He knew then, quite suddenly, how a murderer felt. "I suppose I would," he said, fingering his coffee spoon. "By the way, do you smoke?"

"Of course." The question seemed silly for her. He lit a cigarette for her and placed it between her lips.

"You do that well," she said smoothly, "with the perfection brought about by much practice. You're a good-looking man and you have charm—two things that a good husband is better without."

"You've heard somebody say that," he said wryly.

"Yes," she agreed calmly, "that's what mother says. But let's talk about my possible marriage, shall we? The man I want to marry is young, ambitious, very selfish, and altogether nice. Shall I take a chance on it? I shall do just as you say."

"That's not fair," he objected. "Nobody can accept such a responsibility, Jean. Besides, I am the last person fitted for such a task, surely."

"I don't agree," she said. "You made such an utter failure of marriage that I should say you are best fitted to tell me how to avoid doing the same thing."

"I don't care for your tone," he told her frankly. "Has it never occurred to you that it takes two to make a mess of a marriage? Why not ask your mother about that?"

"I have, but I want to see both sides of the question," she said. "I want to see in my own mind if, allowing for faults on both sides, I could make more of a success of my marriage than you did."

Jean stopped talking and took a mouthful of coffee. But when he made no reply she went on.

"You see," she said, "Mark, the man in question, does not understand my hesitation, and he's very unhappy. I want to put an end to his unhappiness one way or the other, either by a clean break or by marrying him soon. Where do you suppose your marriage failed? Was it mother's fault?"

"Oh, look here, Jean!" he began desperately, making a great show of examining his watch. "Some other time, maybe. I—honestly, there's a meeting——"

"Always a meeting," Jean said, nodding her head. "All through your life you have been inventing meetings, or similar excuses, to avoid facing up to issues, haven't you?"

He leaned forward, glaring at her. "Your mother told you that, I suppose?" he demanded. "Maybe she forgot to tell you that I am the untidiest man on the face of the earth, and that I go to bed in my socks on cold nights?"

"That's what she said," she agreed unemotionally, "but I don't want to hear what she has already told me. You tell me something about her side. Show me where she went wrong, so that I can decide whether or not I can do better than she did."

"Well," he said shortly. "Your mother made a rotten deal when she married me. I wanted to prove myself to her, to show her what a fine bargain she had made in marrying me. I absorbed admiration as a sponge absorbs moisture, and with just the same slimy, rotten result. Gosh, when I think what I must have been like to live with in those days!"

"Yes, you were pretty awful," she told him calmly. "Mother has often told me that."

"And I suppose you probably know," he said, "that I made a fool of myself on the Stock Exchange, and lost not only my own money but your mother's, too? Or did she, perhaps, forget to tell you that small detail?"

The heavy and biting sarcasm tasted bitter in his own mouth.

"No, she told me," she said impatiently. "Go on."

"I'll tell you this much," he said wearily, "in fairness to Mark, or any other fool who wants to get married. What no woman ever seems to allow for is that a man can have a roving eye, or a rotten business sense, or be an out-and-out rotter, but if he loves a woman enough to marry her he expects her to believe in that love. Your mother never believed in me, Jean."

He sighed and went on. "She was so good herself she couldn't make allowances for anybody. She could never reconcile the human being I was with the ideal she had married — and that's a common fault with women, my girl."

JEAN did not answer, just sat there staring at him, her eyes half closed.

"No doubt," he went on, "this Mark of yours gives you the impression that he's the sort of young man that needs a clever young wife to help him. You've great plans for helping him on, for quietly chipping off all the little rough edges until you have fashioned him into something nearer your idea of perfection.

"The trouble is," he said, "when you women have finished re-creating the man you once thought you loved, you wake up one morning and find that you hate the new person you have made."

She nodded. "That's what mother says," she agreed shatteringly, and began to pull on her gloves. Panic swept over him.

"But you haven't decided," he told her hastily. "A thing like this can't be decided over a cup of coffee and two cigarettes."

"You've helped me enormously," she said. "I can see quite clearly now what a hash you two made of marriage. I see it this way. Both of you were too impatient, too ready to throw aside your contract directly it showed signs of strain and stress. You were two very ordinary people, madly and foolishly in love, just as Mark and I are in love, ready to smash up at the first hint of failure.

"In your heart you're both relieved to be free of marriage, to be spared the ordeal of living togther. You are old enough now, you think, to see that marriage is just a sham, a trap for unwary young people. You would live your life so differently if you had the chance to go through it again. You'd take care, this time, to steer clear of mother——"

"That's a lie!" he exclaimed. "You're a bumptious, conceited little girl, and if I had my way I'd give you the spanking you ought to have had years ago. Do you hear?"

He pushed back his chair and for a moment it looked as if he meant to do just that.

But then he went on: "Your mother was the only woman I ever loved, and if I had my time over again I wouldn't change a moment of it. Understand? I'd marry her to-morrow——"

Jean stood up, smiling a little. "That's what mother said. Anyway, thank you—you've helped me a lot," she said, and before he could stop her she was gone.

He sank back in his seat, exhausted, more miserable that he'd ever been in his life. Jean had gone, and he had not helped her at all.

The doors opened and he looked up, gladness surging in him at her reappearance. Then, as she came towards him, he stood up, his heart pounding merrily as it had not done for years, his throat dry. She came towards him, her lips curving generously. She held out her hand.

"Hullo, Geoff," she said simply. "Jean said you wanted me."

He held her hand and smiled at her, oblivious of the curious watching eyes around them.

"Marian," he said. "Marian, how did we ever come to have such a daughter?"

"I always knew," she said contentedly, "even when she was a red-faced, squalling bundle of humanity, as you so sweetly called her. I knew one day she'd be just as she is now. She's nice—don't you think?"

He watched her delightedly, noting all the dear, familiar, half-forgotten details; the little line across the bridge of her nose, the curving lips, the touch of stubbornness about the chin, the way she laced her fingers.

"She's more than nice," he told her deliberately, his eyes fixed absorbedly on her face. "She's the most beautiful, most delightful woman in the world!"

But he knew, and she knew, that he was not speaking of his daughter.

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By the makers of Napro Hair Vitalizer

AT ALL STORES, CHEMISTS AND BEAUTY SALONS

Editorial

Vol. 20, No. 6 July 9, 1952

THE POWER OF THE PURSE

ONE ray of hope has appeared in the midst of the encircling economic gloom.

Two associated N.S.W. companies that make ice-cream have announced substantial cuts in prices of ice-cream bricks.

Although demand for ice-cream falls off in the winter, the companies' action virtually admits that the public's refusal to pay high prices has caused the cuts.

Housewives, weary and dispirited after seven post-war years of rising prices, will raise a weak cheer.

A pat on the back is due also to the children, easily the largest consumers of ice-cream in the community.

Only the young can appreciate fully the spartan self-sacrifice needed to eat less of a favorite sweet.

Economically, the cut in ice-cream prices is insignificant, but it is important psychologically.

Buyer resistance is a curious and capricious thing.

People will go on buying goods at increased prices for a while, provided wages are still rising.

But beyond a certain point, it seems, they will not go, no matter what they are earning.

If enough people refuse to pay high prices, other manufacturers and retailers will have to face the choice of going on selling a little at a high price or dropping their prices and selling more.

To ensure business stability and a continuing high level of employment, lower prices and a large volume of goods are obviously the wiser choice.

So there is power in the housewife's purse.

OUR COVER

Poinsettia growing in the garden of Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Rosbrook's home in Bonython St., Windsor, Queensland, was photographed by Ron Cartledge. The poinsettia, which colors the Queensland landscape in winter, is the floral emblem of the City of Brisbane.

This week:

● On page 36 and 37, which fall within the party supplement, is the first of a new series of articles which will appear weekly called "Youth Sums Up." Staff member Kay Melaun will present youth's point of view on many things in general, and in particular on the important subject of how to make your way with and win the opposite sex. "What has struck me after talking to the kids is that they have come to terms with life so early," Kay said. "Their outlook is balanced, wholesome, and, I might add, more serious than you would imagine. They're full of ideas and have plenty of strong opinions, which they express with great candor." We predict that while the pre-marriage generation will find the "Youth Sums Up" series both entertaining and helpful, parents will be more than interested to discover just what thoughts are occupying their sons' and daughters' minds.

● There's a strong domestic flavor about many newly made movies. On page 25 are color studies of three romantic screen teams—two of them, cinematically speaking, being fond parents.

Next week:

● Though we are, officially, The Australian "Women's" Weekly, we're proud of the fact that men also read our pages avidly. Next week we will have what might almost be earmarked a "men especially" feature—color pictures of male fashions recently displayed in London by sport, stage, and film stars such as Denis Compton and Harold Warrender.

● After some long thought on the subject, the only word which can fairly be used to describe the jewellery designed by high fashion priestess Elsa Schiaparelli and the latest gem-encrusted timepieces dreamed up by Swiss watch manufacturers is that familiar adjective "fabulous." Next week you will be able to see them for yourself in full color. The great Schiaparelli, incidentally, drew most of the inspirations for her jewellery designs from ages past. She searched European museums for months before instructing her craftsmen how to set a single diamond in platinum, or onyx in gold.

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In colour . . . with space for recording baby's first photograph and his daily progress! Also a handbook on modern methods of baby care, including diet, infant ailments, clothing, etc. To secure *your* copy, send your name and address—with 6d. in stamps *— to-day* to Sanitarium Health Food Company, 148 Fox Valley Road, Wahroonga, N.S.W.

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BOOK REVIEW

By BETTY NESBIT

SOMETHING IN THE HEART

By John Lodwick

WHEN 36-year-old George Abbott suddenly resigned from the respected London advertising firm for which he had worked for years, he said to a copy-writing colleague, "I've discovered that at my age I'd rather have three years' fun than 30 with an insurance policy behind me."

And so, doubtless, say many men the world over, caught up in the double coils of domesticity and earning a living.

But few dare take the chance of breaking their ties.

George's subsequent life after he renounces his three basic bourgeois rules for life—the Home, the Job, and the Bank Account—is described with lusty relish by John Lodwick in his novel "Something in the Heart."

Lodwick, a 39-year-old Englishman who prefers living in the south of France to his own native land, and whose home is always filled with characters as lively as those of his books, is never quite sure whether he should advise the other Georges of the world to cut loose or not.

For the stay-at-homes he offers the consolation "that adventure lies not so much in the mileage covered but in something in the heart."

On the other hand, George's new life, which begins with joining a gang of spivs and smugglers and ends somewhere in Europe stooging for a top-line confidence man, seems pretty bright compared with writing advertising copy for toothpaste, laxatives, and corsets.

But is is probably the sharp wit with which Lodwick writes that makes George's adventures seem better than they really were.

After all, is it excitement to be nearly arrested for smuggling? Or to appear in a circus cage with a smelly performing bear? Or was it fun to spend long weeks in a dirty gaol in a dreary French coastal town, smoking bugs out of the sleeping bunk?

In gaol George meets the confidence gentleman he eventually teams up with, but as he starts on a round of Europe's capitals to fleece the unwary he realises that "this is another lease of life with another mortgage, another idiocy."

P.S.—Mr. Lodwick doesn't seem to have a high opinion of Australia. He writes: "Let us pass hastily over George's cousins, dull boys, duller girls with thick ankles who, with the sure intuition of subsequent happiness, had all emigrated to Australia."

"Something in the Heart" is published by William Heinemann. Our copy from Angus and Robertson.

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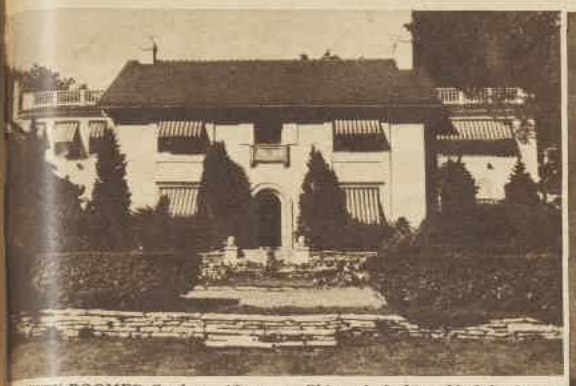
Mannequin's million-dollar courtship



TWENTY-ROOMED Cooke residence on Chicago's fashionable lake front. Thomas Cooke's father, a farming, meat-packing, and oil multi-millionaire, died in 1947, leaving his fortune to his widow and three sons.

YALE GRADUATE Thomas Wellington Cooke (above), to whom Della Oake became engaged six weeks after her arrival in the U.S. from Australia. At right: Study of Della, "taken privately for Tommy," shows her in a Balenciaga gown.

By ROBERT FELDMAN, of our New York staff

Della Oake, glamorous British mannequin who starred in Australian fashion parades this year, met her 25-year-old millionaire fiance, Thomas Cooke, through a geographical accident.

COOKE, one of the youngest American meat-packing and oil tycoons, administers a complex of holdings from New York City, where he has a luxury apartment in fashionable Sutton Place. That is just round the corner from Della's flat.

Shortly after Della arrived from Sydney last March to begin modelling for American Vogue and other publications, she met Julius Monk, compere of the Ruban Bleu, the restaurant-nightclub.

One day Mr. Monk, about to call on a friend, spotted Della hurrying home after a day's work before the cameras. He stopped her and insisted she come along. The friend was Mr. Cooke.

For a long time Della had no inkling she was to marry into one of the wealthiest, most socially prominent families in mid-west America. She discovered this only after she and Tommy had become engaged and he took her to meet Mom in Chicago.

There Della spent the "most wonderful week of my life" at the Cooke estate on Chicago's exclusive North Shore lake front.

One day last week Della took time off during a hectic day under the floodlamps to confide to me that "my three months in the United States—plus Tommy—have made me a confirmed American."

Holding hands with her beaming fiance, she added:

"Frankly, I was a bit terrified at first of America and the speed of things in New York. Then Tommy came along and accomplished my 'indoctrination' in record time. Now I don't ever want to leave."

Della plans to continue her career after marriage.

"I'm afraid I might become bored if I gave up work," she said, looking tentatively in Tommy's direction.

I asked Tommy what he thought. He shot a loving glance at his beautiful bride-to-be.

"Whatever Della wants is all right with me," he replied. "But I hope to talk her into retiring in a few years."

When Della does give up her career, it will be a loss to the fashion world.

At 23, with scarcely five years in the modelling field, her slim figure, blonde hair, and classic features have appeared in women's magazines and fashion advertisements throughout the world.

Della has always been an internationalist. She was born in Tientsin, China, the second of two daughters of a British engineer and his wife.

Della's father packed up the family and left his job as manager of a power station when the Japanese invasion of China threatened. Della was then three.

The family returned to England and the two girls were educated in Dorset.

One day, when Della was a wispy 18-year-old, she made a trip to Shepparton with some girl-friends. While on a tour of the film studios she chanced to catch the eye of the noted photographer Cecil Beaton, then on a movie assignment.

Beaton was so impressed with her unusual grace and charm that he gave her a recommendation. Della landed a job in London right at the top of the modelling profession with the English edition of Vogue. She quickly rose to become a first-line mannequin.

Tommy, a pleasant, chubby fellow, dresses as if he had just walked off a college campus, but he has little of the playboy air about him.

Keenly interested in international affairs, he has travelled widely in Latin America on business and pleasure, and is a perennial member of Bermuda's smart set.

Long honeymoon

AFTER their marriage, which will take place in New York "very soon," Della and Tommy will take a two-month honeymoon.

"We're having our first argument over where we'll go," Della said with a smile. "But we think we'll stay close to New York."

They are postponing visiting Della's family in England until next summer so they can also be there for the coronation.

The young couple plan to set up house in a new and larger apartment in Sutton Place after the honeymoon.

Tommy will go to his downtown business offices every day. Like many married mannequins, Della will continue to put on her glamorous "working clothes" for the cameras.

Della told me that despite the "tons" of food she has been eating in Australia and America, her waist is still a slim 23 inches, laceable down to 20.

"My secret is that I keep to a high-protein diet," she confided, "eating lots of steaks."

"Yes," Tommy chimed in, "you'd better keep on working to keep from starving to death."

Peer has luckiest job in London

ANTHONY, 12-year-old son of Lord and Lady Gifford, whom they left in England at prep. school.

By BETTY BEST, staff reporter

Back in Australia for the first time in six years, Lady Gifford, who before her marriage was Miss Margaret Allen, of Sydney, said her husband had the "luckiest job in London."

LORD GIFFORD is chairman and managing director of a theatre ticket booking office which is in charge of Royal Family visits to places of entertainment.

"Other people's pleasure is our business, so our business is our pleasure, too," said Lord Gifford.

"Of course, Lady Gifford and I have to attend first nights and do a lot of travelling.

"Last summer, for instance, we took a big party to Switzerland for the winter sports.

"We always have a big percentage of Australians in our parties and, of course, we love snow sports.

"Did you know that Lady Gifford was the first woman skier to get to the top of Mt. Kosciusko?"

"Oh, don't say that, Charles," protested Lady Gifford. "That was in the dim ages."

Lord Gifford was in Australia between 1930 and 1935 as A.D.C. to Sir Philip Game, then Governor of New South Wales. He succeeded his uncle as fifth Baron Gifford in 1937, just before the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

"I attended that coronation in my robes," he said, "as I shall attend the coronation of Queen Elizabeth next year. My firm will be making some of the seating arrangements.

"This time my wife will be with me in the Abbey."

In March, 1939, Lord Gifford made a surprise flight to Australia and married Miss Allen in Brisbane after courting her by radio telephone from London.

Their only child, 12-year-old Anthony, has been left at home lest the trip interrupt his schooling.

"He still has another year of prep school to do, and we didn't like to break into his studies because he has been top of his school so far," said Lady Gifford.

Lady Gifford told me that London was feeling the pinch financially these days.

Few buyers

"THE shopkeepers are complaining that no one will buy anything," she added.

"That doesn't apply only to luxury and glamor goods, but to the medium-priced stuff, too.

"But it doesn't mean that London is shabby.

"Australians are always surprised to find that the city still looks beautiful.

"Of course, attending all the first nights as we do, we see a lot of the over-smart dressing such as the film stars and people of that sort wear.

"But, apart from first nights, very few people dress for the theatre."

Lady Gifford said that one of the most moving moments that she can remember occurred on the night that the late King George VI went to "South Pacific"—his last attendance at a theatre.

"At the end of the show the curtain stayed up and the whole cast on stage and the audience turned to the Royal Box to sing the National Anthem," said Lady Gifford.

Lord Gifford, who had arranged the Royal Family's evening, said that the King seemed so well that the announcement of his death a week later was a great shock.

Lady Gifford saw Queen Elizabeth's police horse "Winston" at a horse show recently.

"The policeman who looks after him told me that before a big ceremony like Trooping the Color the Queen practises on 'Winston' at the riding school in the Royal mews in Buckingham Palace to be sure that she and the horse are used to each other," she said.

While they are in Australia the Giffords hope to visit Boonah, Queensland, where they will stay with the Misses Aileen, Enid, and Una Bell on their property, "Coochin Coochin," and make a trip to Melbourne.

Lord Gifford hopes to fit in a few days at Kosciusko with the Australian Ski Club, of which he is a member.

LORD AND LADY GIFFORD, who are paying a short visit to Australia. Lady Gifford was formerly Margaret Allen, of Sydney; Lord Gifford was A.D.C. to a N.S.W. Governor.

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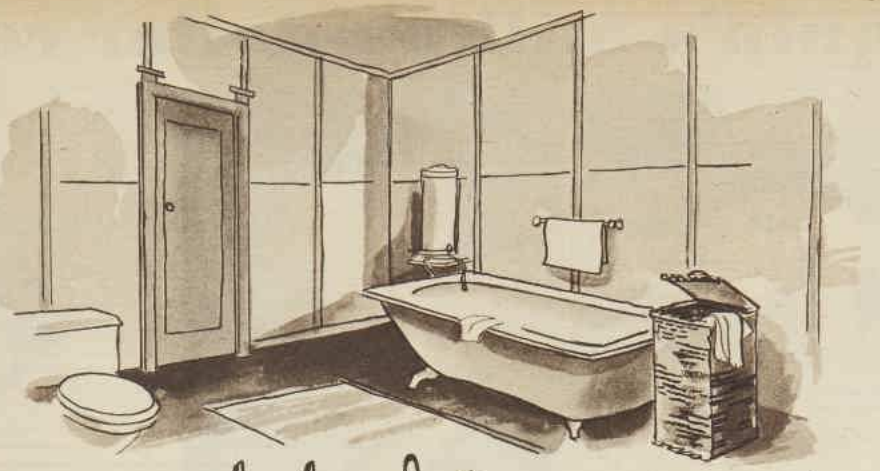
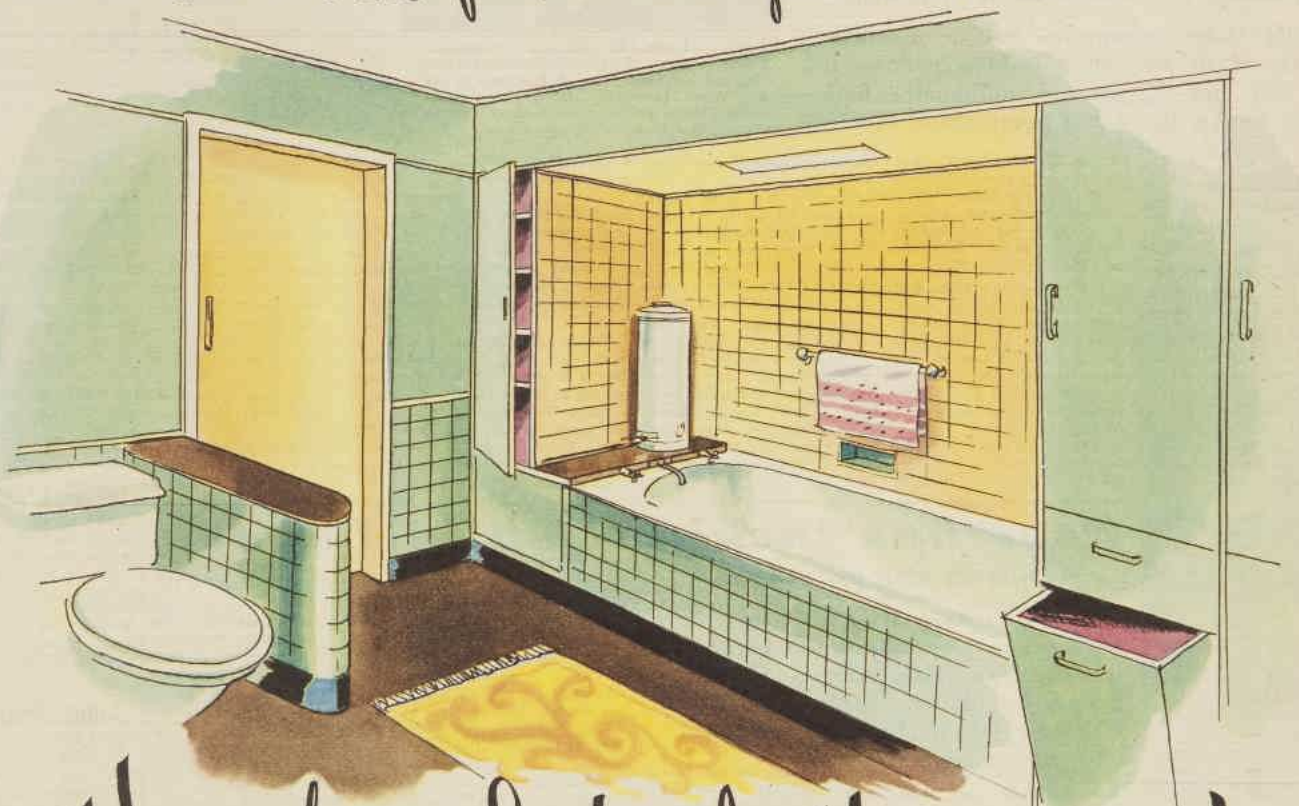


It's wonderful what you can do



with a few sheets of Masonite !

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Some of my patients

SIGNS OF PARKINSON'S DISEASE . . . X-RAY CURE FOR RINGWORM

By A DOCTOR

I HAD a phone call from Mrs. Simpson yesterday to make an appointment for me to see her father-in-law.

She told me that he was staying with her and her husband for a few months.

"He hasn't been happy for some time," she said, "mainly because he feels he is physically able to do less and less."

I remembered Mr. Simpson as a happy, healthy man and a fine pianist. But how he had changed!

As he entered the surgery I noticed the fixed expression on his face, and when I shook hands I could feel a certain amount of stiffness.

His left hand was shaking. "How long has this been going on?" I asked.

"I've noticed it for a few months. I thought it was just worry, but when I write it seems hard to co-ordinate my movements, and my writing has become so bad it is hard to decipher my signature."

I looked more closely at his left hand. There was a fine movement, mostly at the thumb and finger.

This is a very common feature of Parkinson's Disease.

As Mr. Simpson walked over to the couch to be examined I saw that he had a slight stoop and that his arm did not swing by his side as he walked.

I examined him thoroughly. The only abnormality I could find was a general stiffness which was of the same degree in all positions of his joints though not equally marked in all muscles.

"You have Parkinson's Disease, Mr. Simpson," I told him. "Many men at your age suffer from it, but it is the type that is somewhat amenable to treatment. We cannot cure it, but it won't shorten your life and we can do a lot to ameliorate your symptoms.

"Go back to work, and I should advise you to practise the piano again."

Broadly speaking, there are two types of Parkinson's—the one where the tremor is the chief feature and the other, stiffness. We know of no drug that has much effect on the tremor, but the stiffness may very often be improved.

Parkinson's Disease is a most fascinating study. The feature by which most people know it is a tremor.

The cause of the disease is still obscure. We only know it is probably due to a degenerative change in some of the cells or primitive pathways deep in the brain.

In the form of the disease occurring in the fifth and sixth decades, the mental powers remain unaffected to the end.

In the tragic form which follows upon encephalitis lethargica, an epidemic which swept the world soon after World War I, the mind of the sufferer degenerates, the judgment becomes very poor, and very frequently—particularly if the diease has affected the patient during childhood—the moral outlook of the individual is debased.

MRS. BRADLEY seemed very upset when she came to see me to-day with her pretty curly - headed daughter June.

"Doctor, mother says June has ringworm, so could you give me an ointment to cure it? I couldn't bear to have her lovely curls shaved off," she said.

I looked at a patch on the kiddie's scalp. It was a circular patch which seemed to have no hairs on it, but on close examination showed a number of short, stumpy hairs.

I removed one and it revealed the characteristic fungus of ringworm.

"Ringworm of the scalp is different to that of the body," I told Mrs. Bradley. "Ointment will clear up ringworm of the body, but when it is on the scalp the fungus is deep in the hair follicles and ointment is not sufficient to cure it. She must have an X-ray treatment."

"But what will happen to her hair?"

"I am afraid the part rayed will fall out in about three weeks' time," I continued, "but this automatically cures the disease, as the fungus is confined to the hair.

"But don't worry, the hair will grow again almost at once and there is no reason why it shouldn't be as lovely as it is now."

"But," said Mrs. Bradley, "I remember hearing of a case where the hair did not grow again. My uncle, who is a chemist, says there is a drug which is better than X-rays."

"X-ray is quite safe when done by experts," I said. "The drug which your uncle spoke about is probably thallium acetate. Well, although the hair grows again after using it there are other risks.

"The drug is very toxic, and deaths have been recorded from an overdose.

"I am sure you'll agree with me that X-rays are the lesser evil, particularly as June may not need to have the whole scalp treated. At the moment I can only see one patch.

"Any depilatory drug must affect every hair on the body equally, whereas with X-ray we can localise the loss of hair to any area we choose."

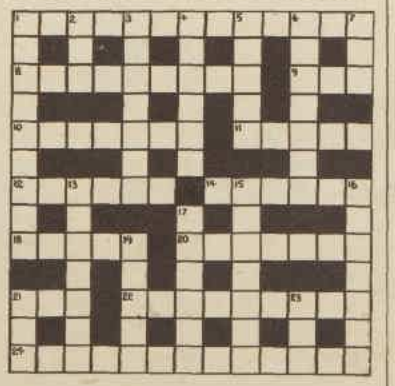
Mrs. Bradley asked me whether I thought she should get rid of their puppy.

"Not necessarily," I replied. "Though ringworm of the body is often contracted from animals, we do not think that is the case with scalp ringworm."

All names are fictitious and do not refer to any living person.

We regret that our doctor cannot answer any inquiries.

THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Fruit pastry row in perfect arrangement (4, 3, 5).
8. Little bird and a castle in retaliation (3, 2, 3).
9. Turn summit into kitchen utensil (3).
10. Pins are in this nation (7).
11. I and a lass hidden in this fibre (5).
12. Discussion consumed by a short debutante (8).
14. Easy gallop done in trance (6).
18. Vehicle disliked by Napoleon III (5).
20. Reginald, I and other human beings form a system of government (7).
21. Puss made by Shakespeare about nought (3).
22. Chew mother's convulsion consumed (9).
24. Hogarth's onward course in dissipation (3, 8).

DOWN

1. I stop dean (anagr., 9).
2. Stroke from both sides (3).
3. Got site in a selfish man (7).
4. Purpose in shelter (6).
5. Solemn appeals to God containing a knocked about hat (5).
6. Pit's ode (anagr., 7).
7. Turn a sailor into a rodent (3).
13. Ultimate facts of a theory to be found under alluvial deposit (3, 4).
15. Reasoning in a gin rug (7).
16. Ned errs (anagr., 7).
17. Rubber, not necessarily made of rubber (6).
19. Woman does it to a day when fixing the wedding (5).
21. Tune in the atmosphere (3).
23. One on dice (3).

Solution will be published next week.

Solution to last week's crossword.

Soft Loveliness

NEW! IRRESISTIBLE RADIANCE!

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WHEN IT'S TULIP TIME IN ENGLAND

● ***The fen country of south-east England looks like a corner of Holland when the tulips are in bloom. The tulip industry started there 400 years ago with bulbs from Vienna.***

TULIP QUEEN. Nineteen-year-old Beryl Patrick, who was Lincolnshire's Tulip Queen for 1952. Every Sunday in the flowering season, more than 100,000 people view the tulips at 600 bulb-farms in the district.

ARMFUL OF BLOOMS. Margaret Caly (right) helps to pick tulips on her father's nurseries. The bulb industry of Lincolnshire has now recovered from its wartime setbacks, and is prospering again.

WORKERS in the tulip fields near Spalding, England. More than £200,000 worth of blooms are sold every year.

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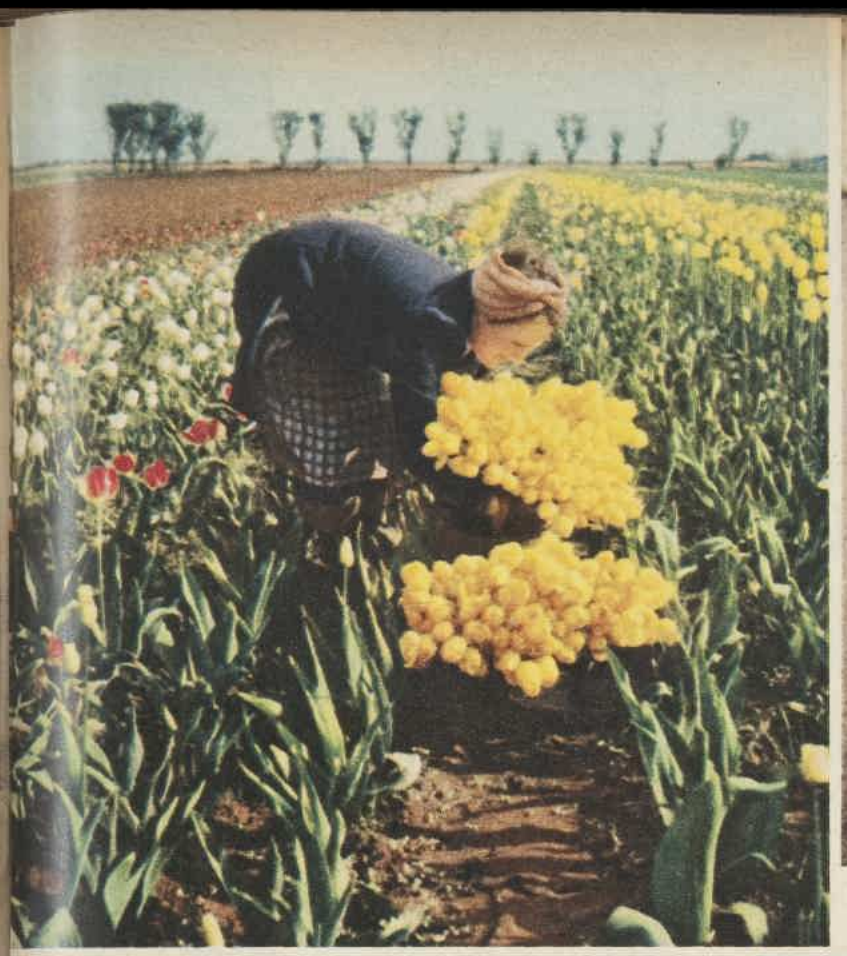

GOLDEN HARVEST. Mrs. J. K. Caly, of Old Fendyke, Weston Hill, picks a golden harvest of tulips. Village streets are laid out with beds of tulips, and in the season stalls along the roadside are laden with the blooms. The sale of tulip bulbs is as important to the trade as is the sale of the flowers.

TOUCH OF HOLLAND in Lincolnshire. Jacqueline Limming and Nicholas Lepora wear Dutch costumes to match their tulips. Nearly 3000 acres in the county of Lincolnshire produce tulips in a dazzling variety of colors.

PICKERS hold arms full of blooms in the tulip fields at Moulton Chapel, near Spalding. Spalding, with wharves and old inns similar to those seen in Holland, is the capital of the English tulip trade.

BLOOMS BY THE ROADSIDE. Visitors buying tulips at Weston Hill. Blooms cost 1/- to 1/6 per dozen. Only popular varieties are cut. To maintain the quality of the various strains, the best tulips are "headed" so that the sap goes back into the bulb.

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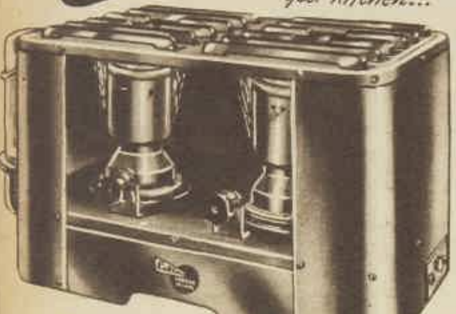
Beautifully designed and finished to grace your Kitchen...



First COMPLETELY MODERN KEROSENE OPERATED HOME COOKER

Blue Flame

Power restrictions will come and go but the "Colton" Cooker Deluxe is always ready to perfectly cook a complete meal any time anywhere! With its beautiful appearance and baked on enamel finish it will take pride and place in your kitchen. The slightest turn of the wick gives instant flame adjustment thus producing a fine range of temperatures from high to low. With no pressure and no pumping you can cook in complete confidence. It's quick, clean, odourless, economical and cool to work over. Ideal for holiday shack. An essential appliance for your home.

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"I don't know where my money goes. I'm afraid I'll have to ask for a raise!"

"I don't see how you can say museums are dull. I really enjoyed myself this afternoon."

It seems to me

By

Dorothy Drain

COMING back in the plane from my holiday I read a newspaper thoroughly for the first time in a month.

The world, as far as I could judge, appeared no better or worse than when I instituted my annual holiday policy of ignoring it.

In the paper was an article headed "Why you can't catch any fish." It couldn't have been more relevant.

It appears that fish are not madly plentiful in Australian waters, anyhow. That explains a great deal.

Fish, stated the article, prefer colder climes. Foolish creatures.

New South Wales, which appears to have slipped into the Arctic Circle during my absence, ought to be cold enough for the coldest fish.

* * *

AMONG the mail waiting for me was a booklet called "Tackle Topics," produced by a firm which sells fishing tackle.

For me, just back at the desk, it made rather wistful reading, though people whose tastes don't run to fishing may consider it odd to feel wistful about articles headed "Sinkers for Rock Hoppers" and "Worms and Worming."

I liked the page devoted to care of reels. "Don't use your reel like a winch," said the optimistic writer. Winch indeed. No such fate, unfortunately, came within biting distance of my reel.

* * *

GARDENING seems a more rewarding hobby than fishing.

Two of my hyacinths have taken the bait and risen to the surface. Sometime I must find a gardening expert and discuss the plight of the daffodils which got away.

* * *

PROGRESS may be slow but in some ways it is sure.

Brisbane, where I spent part of my holiday, used to be quite an old-fashioned city compared with the southern capitals. You could switch on the electricity any time.

But it is catching up with the modern trend. Now it has power restrictions, too. Citizens are eagerly discussing kerosene lamps and candles. The trade in oil stoves and heaters is booming.

Soon Queenslanders will be able to exchange moan for moan about blackouts with their southern friends.

* * *

WHEN the court vacation rang down an interval curtain last week on the Royal Commisson on Liquor, most Sydney people heaved a regretful sigh.

Some of the Commission's most ardent fans tell me that they are extremely grateful to this paper for adding a novel to its attractions. Otherwise, they say, the court vacation would have left them quite bereft of entertaining reading for the long winter evenings.

COLLEAGUE reports the following cosy bit of English atmosphere from "Thunder on the Hill," Hollywood version of the play "Bonaventure."

Says one character (anxious to cheer up the heroine, who is condemned to death for a murder she didn't do), "I have cooked this Shepherd's pie and Yorkshire pudding especially for you."

It reminds me of a story a newspaper man tells.

Making his first trip to England, he travelled in a ship which, as the line always carried Anglo-Indians, made a feature of its curry and trimmings.

He was a country lad, and it was only after some time at sea that he decided to be enterprising in his choice from the dinner menu.

So, after his soup, he ordered Bombay Duck. The steward didn't flicker an eyelid.

As the plate with its little pieces of dried fish arrived, a retired Indian Army colonel leant across the table and said with admiration, "Must be awfully fond of that stuff, old chap."

* * *

GIRL I know went to the Elena Nikolaidi concert in Sydney last week.

"Enjoy it?" someone asked.

"Oh, yes," she said. "I was absolutely enraged all the time. Usually I sit at a woman's recital and think, 'Well, maybe I can't sing, but I have better taste in dress.' Or perhaps, 'At least I haven't legs like a piano.' But Nikolaidi looks beautiful, dresses beautifully. Even her diamonds were real. Made me perfectly furious."

* * *

AMERICAN cosmetic expert Miss La Verne Johnson says that whenever she gets depressed she goes out and buys five new hats. She owns 86.

"Fancy that," said a housewife friend of mine, serving up the mince for dinner. "Fancy a woman who can afford five new hats getting depressed."

* * *

BING CROSBY said recently that fans these days seemed to prefer "guys like Johnny Ray who sing like they have nervous breakdowns."

There was a time when Bing
(The very latest thing)
Made some who heard him sing
Their hands in horror wring.

Gently the passing years
Change most things, even ears.
Now Bing, of silver tongue,
The old guard stands among . . .

Respectable with age,
No longer moves to rage
Those who reserve their sneers
For Johnny and his tears . . .

Takes comfort, as he may,
That each dog has his day,
For even Johnny Ray
Will be old hat some day.

Warming Extra Blood Flow brings Quick relief from

CHEST COLDS & CONGESTION

Just pat some Sloan's Liniment on your chest and back to relieve deep-down soreness of the stubborn chest cold. No rubbing, no massaging. Sloan's induces a comforting, pain-relieving warmth by stimulating the circulation. Its warming tingle begins its healing work immediately it's dabbed on. For colds, coughs, sore throat — and for all muscular pains, sprains or strains, rely on Sloan's Liniment for quick relief. Keep a bottle of Sloan's always handy.

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In spare hours at home just make FRENCH hand-made FLOWERS or GLOVES for Profit. Simple — FREE working outfit — Distance no object — a market for your work GUARANTEED. Import restrictions increase demand. Earn £5 to £10 or more weekly.
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Wise mother uses Cuticura Ointment after baby's bath and at every nappie change to keep him cool and comfortable. The mildly medicated, gentle emollient, Cuticura, soothes chafing, sores, inflammation, and deals sweetly with nappie rash.
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ASTHMA COUGHS GO FIRST DAY

Don't let coughing, wheezing attacks of Asthma and Bronchitis poison your system, sap your energy, ruin your health and weaken your heart. Mendaco, a new American scientific medicine, starts immediately to circulate through the blood, quickly curbing the attacks. The very first day the thick phlegm is dissolved, giving free, easy breathing and letting you sleep the night through in comfort. Get Mendaco from your chemist or store to-day under positive guarantee to stop your Asthma coughing and to give you free, easy breathing the first day or money back.

My Heinz SEVEN SOUP Week!

MONDAY

Heinz Tomato Soup tonight! M-m-m! Family really loved it!

TUESDAY

Put flask of Heinz Onion Soup in school lunches. Big success!

WEDNESDAY

Gave myself treat tonight - Heinz Asparagus Soup. So creamy!

THURSDAY

Bitterly cold, so— Heinz Pea Soup with Ham. George cheered.

FRIDAY

Tried the new Heinz Green Pea Soup today. Must order more!

SATURDAY

Heinz Vegetable Soup. Wonderfully tasty. Family agreed.

SUNDAY

Mother came. Served her favourite - Heinz Celery Soup. All smiles.

Everyone enjoys a different Heinz Soup each day!

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A52

AUSTRALIAN TENNIS TEAM Mervyn Rose (left), Lewis Hoad, Harry Hopman (captain), Ken Rosewall, and Ken McGregor, walk on to a court at Wimbledon for practice. Jean Sedgman writes that the Australians, including her husband, Frank Sedgman, were first favorites with the English tennis crowds who attended the big championships.

Wimbledon: a fan's dream come true

Exclusive story by JEAN SEDGMAN

This Wimbledon was a tennis fan's dream come true.

It was a Wimbledon of perfect tennis weather, with not a rustle of wind stirring the ivy festooning the Centre Court, a thrilling roar from the crowd after every rally, and between the courts a constant fashion parade of tennis society's loveliest.

EVERY morning a limousine called at our flat in Kensington to take us to Wimbledon.

Our arrival there was my daily terror. Cameras clicked. Lined up and pressing on each side were thick ranks of fans cheering and surging forward for autographs.

The same huge guard of honor of tennis devotees saw the players off at night.

These nightly departures taught me one thing: After a day's play a tennis husband takes as long to dress as his wife ever did.

There always seemed to be a queue of anxious tennis brides tapping their feet, looking at their watches.

Dolly Ann Seixas would exclaim, "I don't know any man who takes as long to dress as Vic."

Mrs. Irvin Dorfman would chime in, "Oh, really? I thought my husband took the cake."

All of which comforted me a little—because I privately had thought Frank was the slowest of all.

It made getting to some of the evening social functions even more frantic.

Lord Templewood invited us along with the Hopmans, Dick Savitt, and Doris Hart to a very grand dinner party at the House of Lords.

But with Frank having a late doubles match and our getting lost among the thousand rooms of the Houses of Parliament, we finally arrived an hour and a half late.

What impressed me most was the instinctive courtesy our hosts showed to newcomers like myself.

An elderly distinguished man and his wife came forward to say good-bye. I smiled and shook hands. Then, to my dismay, I saw all the other women curtsy to them.

They were the Earl of Athlone, Queen Mary's brother, and his wife, Princess Alice.

English fashion experts complained that this year's Wimbledon was not like "the good old days." But to me it seemed that the women dressed much more formally than they do at home—as if Wimbledon were a garden party.

Yellow was a surprisingly predominant color among the serried rows of women round the Centre Court. From a distance some of the rows looked like canary perches.

Englishmen were much less suitably dressed than Continental spectators or Americans and Australians in their cool gabardines, and looked to be suffering in the sweltering sun-trap of the Centre Court.

Hundreds of them melted in dark suits, tight collars, and ties—even waistcoats.

The effect of this famous Centre Court crowd is still terrifying to Wimbledon newcomers.

Maureen ("Little Mo") Connolly was no exception.

Before her match was due to go on she was jittering in her dressing-room: "Oh, dear—only six more minutes to go—oh, dear!" and trying to compose herself.

The great French veteran Jean Borotra, beloved of the crowd, gave them their expected fill of fun this year as in the past. Incidentally, he and his doubles partner, Destremeau, were the only men to appear in long trousers.

Bounding for a sizzling cross-court ball, Borotra took a spectacular dive into the spectators' stand and disappeared among them. The crowd roared.

This year in Brussels, Ken McGregor mimicked and outmatched this crowd-pleasing antic of Borotra's. At a suitable opportunity, running for a wide ball, Ken continued his run right up the stairs among the crowd to the top of the stands.

In the mixed doubles Borotra celebrated victory and defeat alike by bending gracefully to kiss his partner's hand, then rushing to the net to pay the same homage to his woman opponent.

One day this week he kissed my hand on three separate occasions. On the last time I wasn't quick enough to remove my glove—rather travel-soiled—for him.

The Australians' net-storming tactics were this year's biggest Wimbledon thrill. Dick Savitt and Eric Sturgess, who would have preferred to fight it out with them from the baseline, attempted to lure them into the idea by taunting Frank, Ken, and our other boys with: "You aerial merchants—why don't you guys learn some ground strokes?"

Watching the championships was as gruelling to this spectator as to many of the competitors.

I rushed from court to court to keep up with the fortunes of our Australians. Soon I found I was only one of a colony of regulars doing the same thing.

They were moving en masse not only to see Frank, Ken McGregor, and Mervyn Rose but also "Muscles Junior" Rosewall and Lew Hoad, who, with "Little Mo" Connolly, won particular favor for their youth and startling ability.

U.S. PLAYER Doris Hart, who, with the Sedgmans, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Hopman, and Dick Savitt, attended Lord Templewood's Wimbledon dinner party at the House of Lords.

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MR. HARRY PARKER reads a letter from his son, Gordon, in Japan, to his youngest children, Jennifer and Jimmy (left), family nurse Mrs. A. Clay, and Mrs. Parker, who is knitting. At right is Mrs. Cherry Parker with her two daughters, Margaret and Kathleen, who are due to arrive in Australia from Japan early this month.

Warm welcome arranged for Japanese wife

By MARY COLES, staff reporter

Mrs. Gordon Parker, who will be the first Japanese wife of an Australian serviceman to arrive in Australia, will step straight from the street into the big garden surrounding the home of her parents-in-law at Ringwood, Victoria. There are no gates for her to push open.

AUSTRALIAN SERVICEMAN Gordon Parker, who won a long fight to bring his Japanese wife and children home.

THEY were pulled down 15 years ago because Gordon's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Parker, wanted their children and friends always to regard their rambling two-storied home as an "open house."

It is with this spirit of "open house" that 22-year-old Cherry Parker from Japan, her husband, Gordon, and their two little daughters, Margaret, 2½, and Kathleen, 1, will be welcomed by a big gathering of family and friends.

In her bedroom Mrs. Parker will find another gesture of welcome, "a friendship garden" of spring daffodils and hyacinths growing in a bowl.

It was sent by an unknown well-wisher when the Federal Government announced last March that Australians married to Japanese girls were to be allowed to bring their wives and families home.

Cupboards stacked high with books and toys, which belonged to Gordon and his brothers and sisters, are waiting for Margaret and Kathleen to play with.

And their eight-year-old uncle, Jimmie Parker, is ready to teach them to ride his pony.

At the Ringwood Church of England the Rev. F. E. Lewin is planning a special welcome for Mrs. Parker the first day she attends a service there.

Mr. Harry Parker is a former Mayor of Ringwood, and managing director of a well-known Melbourne business firm. His wife, the granddaughter of a former Chief Justice of Victoria, the late Sir Edward Holroyd, is a tireless social worker.

"After three years of battling and heartbreak to get Cherry here I have grown to know and love her as a real daughter," Mrs. Parker said sincerely.

"From her letters and what Gordon has told us about her, my husband and I are honored and delighted to have her as a member of the family.

"Alone in Kure for so much of the time since their marriage, she did dressmaking to keep herself and the children because Gordon was not able to send her money regularly.

"Although tormented by the uncertainty of whether their little household could ever be united, Cherry never uttered a word of complaint.

"She had no relatives to turn to. Her parents were killed in the Hiroshima atom bomb attack."

But from now on Cherry will be surrounded by a big affectionate family.

There's June, the eldest Parker daughter, a land girl on a property at Nagambie; Donald, in the Premier's Department in Melbourne; Jeanette (Mrs. John Porter); Robin, who recently finished his National Service training; Jennifer, aged 15, and Jimmie, who are both at school.

Discussing her son's marria to Cherry, Mrs. Parker said s had always believed that rac prejudices were in direct o position to Christian teachin

"I feel that if a man lov a woman deeply enough marry her, no one has a right to interfere," she adde

"My only concern abo such marriages is for the ch dren, who can be hurt by cruelty of some people.

"We know that Marga and Kathleen will have pr lems to face at times, but will be right behind them ways."

The story of Gordon Cherry is one of devotion struggle.

Gordon joined the A.I.F the age of 18, a few months fore the war ended. He mained in the Army to se with B.C.O.F. in Japan.

Since he had always b keen to be a doctor, he bec a medical orderly at an A tralian Army hospital first post at Kure.

There he met the youth orphaned Cherry, who w civilian worker at the hosp

Both young and lonely, became friends and eventu fell in love.

After three years' Army vice, Gordon returned to bourne, was discharged, returned to Japan to m Cherry at a Church of land ceremony.

The contract was also peated at the British Emb to make everything compl legal.

"Then the torture beg his mother recalled.

"He was not allowed to in Japan or bring his wife to Australia.

"Home again, he enr at the Melbourne High S to study for his Unive matric. so that he coul Medicine.

"However, he failed i exams., went to Japan to another try at bringing C back, but had to return to bourne, where he took a j save up for yet another to see his wife.

"He went away again Christmas while we carri the campaign here. It great day when we won mission and were able to Gordon a cable announci glad news."

Maths wizard has trouble with hats

By FREDA YOUNG, staff reporter

Professor Olgo, the mathematical wizard in the Trinder show at the Tivoli Theatre, Melbourne, has a prodigious memory for figures but can never remember his hat. He even forgot to bring one from England for his Australian tour.

HIS wife told me this when I visited them backstage. "He forgets quite a few things, but mostly hats," she said

On the stage Professor Olgo had just finished playing around with six rows of six figures given by the audience.

They were written on a blackboard by his wife. It was turned away for 15 minutes while the Professor went on with another part of the act.

Then blindfolded he called the figures out, just as if he were reading them, in straight lines, from right to left, vice versa, up and down, diagonally, and spiralling from the centre.

He didn't miss one. His photographic mind had recorded them perfectly.

"I can do much more complicated things than that, though I have never studied mathematics," Professor Olgo told me.

"Once I wanted to show how clever I was, but I have simplified my act to get a few laughs, because people prefer it that way.

"For instance, practically everyone knows what day of the week he was born or was married, so I ask for dates and give the days they fall on. This makes lots of fun."

To do this Professor Olgo claimed he has memorised the day of the week that January 1 has fallen on for the past 1000 years.

Professor Olgo's mathematical gift was discovered when he was five. On the day he learnt to count to 10 he found he could multiply 79 by 13.

His frightened father rushed him off to a Viennese specialist. After being reassured that the lad wasn't mad, the father quickly got the prodigy and his talent into the theatre.

PROFESSOR OLGO and his wife backstage at the Melbourne Tivoli. Mrs. Olgo likes to sew while waiting for her husband to do his act.

"I don't know how I do these things," said the professor. "I just do them. I never have to practise my act unless I am in a foreign country, and then I have to learn it in the language of that country.

"I have presented it in seven languages without difficulty.

"People don't believe that I can't speak their language thoroughly when they see the act."

American surgeons have offered £5000 for his brain after death. They want to discover how the calculating machine behind his eyebrows works.

"But I'm not interested," he said. "Why should I be? I'll be dead then, anyway."

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ENGAGED. Dick Treweeke, of "Mocoleche" Station, Bourke, only son of Mrs. Swift Treweeke, of Lane Cove, and the late Mr. Treweeke, and Loma Cochrane, ward of Miss S. M. Cochrane, of Mosman.

ABOARD THE NEPTUNIA. Dr. and Mrs. Frank Louat (left) and Mr. and Mrs. Andy Berts at the dinner-dance on the Neptunia to raise funds for the Naughty Nineties Ball on October 3. The theme of the ball will be "A Night at Montmartre" and guests will dress accordingly.

HAPPY COUPLE. Dr. Peter Harvey, second son of Dr. and Mrs. Cotter Harvey, Bellevue Hill, and his bride, formerly Elizabeth Edols, of "Worroo," Forbes, at the Pickwick after marriage at St. Stephen's.

Social Gottings

PICTURE FROM PERTH of Dr. John Taylor (right) and his wife, Barbara, formerly of Sydney, with G.O.C. Western Command, Major-General A. R. Garrett, and Mrs. Garrett at the United Service Institution party at Swan Barracks, Perth.

LONDON WEDDING. Dr. Keith Daymond, of Mosman, and his bride, formerly Dr. Hilary Hawkins, of Roseville, after their wedding at the Queen's Chapel of the Savoy, London.

COMING OF AGE. Marjorie Conley, winner of the A.B.C.'s Concerto and Vocal contest, dances with her singing tutor, Mr. Roland Foster, at her birthday party at Princes given by her parents.

COUNTRY INTEREST. John Grigg, of Willoughby, and his bride, formerly Dorothy Macpherson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. D. W. Macpherson, after their wedding at Christ Church Cathedral, Grafton.

MANY Sydney and country folk will motor to Newcastle next Friday for the Matrons' Ball at Newcastle City Hall, when 36 hostesses will entertain 400 guests.

City travellers will include Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Coppleson and Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Howard. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Lysaght will come from Wollongong and the Caswell Staceys from Singleton. Hostesses who will also have house-parties are Mrs. R. S. Adams and Mrs. H. L. Wheeler. Mrs. Adams' son Bill and his wife, of "Flakenhoe," Breeza, will stay with her, and Mrs. Wheeler's sister, Mrs. E. C. Anderson Stuart, will come from Sydney.

The ball will take the form of a dinner-dance, with the hostesses catering for healthy appetites by cooking their own special dishes at home for the ball.

• • •

EVERYONE was waiting to see the swans—two black and two white—in the artificial lake at Warwick Farm racecourse, but they ducked behind their specially made shelter when the horses thundered round the track past the lake and refused to budge from there all the afternoon. Secretary of the A.J.C., Bill Parry-Okeden, is hoping that after a few more meetings the swans will become keen racegoers themselves and thus show off for the crowd.

The informal, picnic-race-meeting atmosphere of Warwick Farm contrasted with the sophisticated glamor of Randwick, and picnic lunches under the trees in the frosty sunshine were enjoyed just as they were thirteen years ago, when Warwick Farm meetings were a regular thing. A buffet luncheon beneath a red-and-white-striped marquee was given by Mrs. Alan Potter, wife of the chairman of the A.J.C. Her guests included Mrs. Denis Allen, whose father, the late Sir Colin Stephen, was chairman of the A.J.C. when races were held at Warwick Farm.

LEADING members of the legal fraternity and their wives attended the reception given by the N.S.W. Bar Association at Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron on the last day of the law term. Two hundred guests crowded the dining-room and sun-verandah.

Just missing out on the reception were the president of the association, Mr. G. E. Barwick, Q.C., and Mrs. Barwick, who will return to Sydney next week after three months in England. Guest of honor was the Chief Justice, the Hon. K. W. Street. Other guests included Mr. Justice Owen and Mrs. Owen, Mr. Justice Roper and Mrs. Roper, Mr. Justice Herron and Mrs. Herron, and Mr. Justice Kinsella and Mrs. Kinsella.

• • •

MY Melbourne newshound tells me that Captain Pat Perry, who was recently appointed Chief Naval Judge Advocate of the R.A.N., and his wife are the proud parents of a baby son and heir, who is to be named Charles. Mrs. Perry was formerly Margaret Booker.

• • •

MUSICAL-BOXES which play "Waltzing Matilda" and "On the Road to Gundagai" are "must" items in the luggage of blind pianist Alec Templeton and his attractive wife when they return to their 75-year-old white frame home in Greenwich, Connecticut, U.S.A., after his Australian tour.

"Everything in our house plays a tune," they told me. While they were in Melbourne, Mrs. Templeton searched for antique pieces of fine china to add to her collection gathered in all parts of the world. Mr. Templeton began a series of concerts at the Town Hall this week.

FIRST NIGHT. Sheila Helpman, sister of noted dancer Robert, and National Theatre representative Garnet Carroll at opening of "Giselle" at the Tivoli Theatre.

NOTICED Lord and Lady Gifford among the playgoers who gathered backstage at the Theatre Royal after the premiere of "To Dorothy, a Son." They were anxious to meet the leads, Jimmy Hanley, Rosemary Miller, and Babs MacKinnon, as they had seen Richard Attenborough and Sheila Sim play the star parts in London. Lord and Lady Gifford, who are revisiting Australia, shared a box with theatrical producer Doris Fitton and her husband, Mr. N. K. Mason. Rosemary, who does not appear on the stage during the play except as a voice from a bed, told me she keeps her mind alert for the cues by knitting. Having out-knitted her own sweater wardrobe, she has begun one for her father.

• • •

I HEAR THAT: Ray and May Bowman are filling the picturesque Bowman homestead, "Balmoral," Muswellbrook, with exquisite furniture. . . . Sue Playfair and her sisters, Mrs. Jimmy Williams and Mrs. Alex MacLeod, are already looking forward to the return of their globe-trotting mother, Mrs. Strath Playfair, who is now in London. She will fly to America in August, where her husband will meet her. They will stay with Mr. Playfair's sister, Mrs. Bernard McMurdo, before returning to Australia. . . . Mrs. Ernest Watt has designed the invitations for this year's Black and White Ball at the Trocadero on October 7. She has drawn a young girl in a black evening frock and scattered black and white hearts across the page.

Anne

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1 ROMANCE between Vern Haskell (Arthur Kennedy) and Beth (Gloria Henry) ends when she dies in a hold-up. Vern sees a clue in the word "chuck-a-luck," which the murderer's dying accomplice murmurs.

2 FABULOUS Altar Keane (Marlene Dietrich), ex-saloon entertainer, owns a ranch named "Chuck-a-luck," which is a bandit refuge. Sensing a lead, Vern has himself gaoled so as to meet one of Altar's men.

RANCHO NOTORIOUS

GLAMOROUS Marlene Dietrich and a cast of sterling players go back to the old West in "Rancho Notorious" (R.K.O.).

Unexpected, bold effects have been achieved by unorthodox director Fritz Lang through cleverly mixing tragedy, brutality, and warm sentiment.

An unusual feature of this dramatic Western is the handling of musical background. Ken Darby composed the theme ballad "The Legend of Chuck-a-Luck." The words of the song occasionally take over film action and provide the striking finale.

3 DRAMATIC gaol-break frees Vern and Altar's boy-friend, Frenchy Fairmont (Mel Ferrer), right. He takes Vern, who has gained his trust, to "Chuck-a-luck."

4 MASQUERADING as a fugitive at Altar's ranch, Vern collects little information. To ward off suspicion, he pretends to admire Altar.

5 QUESTIONED by Vern, who discovers that she has a brooch which belonged to Beth, Altar later admits that the bauble was given to her by a guest named Kinch. Vern then tells her about its tragic story.

6 FACE TO FACE with guilty Kinch (Lloyd Gough), right, Vern cannot bring himself to shoot; he turns the bandit over to the sheriff. Outlaw buddies rescue Kinch and all of them ride back to "Chuck-a-luck."

7 GUNFIGHT takes place when Kinch and the bandits reach the ranch, determined to even things up with Altar, who, they now know, has betrayed them. Diving for their guns, Frenchy and Vern unite against the rest, and Kinch is killed in the fight.

8 MORTALLY wounded while trying to shield Frenchy from a sniper's bullet, Altar dies with his name on her lips. As "Chuck-a-luck" burns the two men ride away.

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THREE SCREEN TEAMS WITH HEART APPEAL

★ ***Pictures about children often capture the heart of the public. Hollywood mines this rich vein of human interest in two new films — "Room For One More," starring the husband-and-wife team Cary Grant and Betsy Drake, and "Close To My Heart," with Ray Milland and Gene Tierney. Early Californian adventure brings Anne Baxter and Dale Robertson together in "The Outcasts of Poker Flat."***

CARY GRANT and Betsy Drake (above) are the parents of three children in "Room For One More" (Warners). Their troubles mount when they become foster-parents to several other youngsters.

RAY MILLAND and Gene Tierney (left) make an appeal for child adoption in Warners' "Close To My Heart." A six-months-old charmer named John Winslow is the central character in the drama.

ANNE BAXTER and Dale Robertson (right) co-star as a couple of fugitives in "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" (Fox). They fall in love when they are stranded in Poker Flat, a Californian mining town, during a blizzard.

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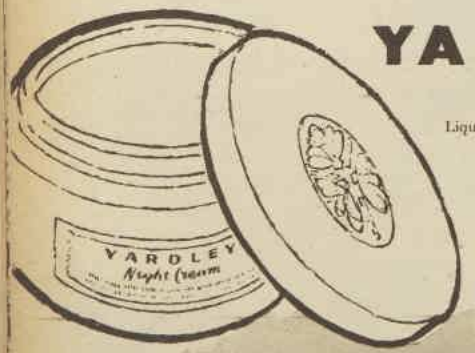

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Overseas movie gossip

From London and Hollywood

BIG casting news for Australia's Peter Finch is that he will play the plum Shakespearian role of Mercutio in the famous Old Vic Company's production this year of "Romeo and Juliet," starting in September. Dark-haired Claire Bloom, Charlie Chaplin's latest discovery, will play Juliet to Englishman Alan Badel's Romeo. The play will move north to be the highlight of the Edinburgh Festival.

* * *

CELEBRATED English actor John Gielgud is going to Hollywood for his first film role there—as Cassius in "Julius Caesar." It is to be made by Joseph ("All About Eve") Mankiewicz.

* * *

ERROL FLYNN has joined the *talent scouts*. At last week's film garden party he was enchanted by the vision of golden-haired, green-eyed starlet June Thorburn, demure in a period dress from her first small part in "Pickwick Papers." Flynn offered to be her kind uncle, and is badgering Elstree Studios to find her a part in his "The Master of Ballantrae." He has already extracted from them a promise to screen-test her.

* * *

ANN TODD's super urchin cut is the admiration of everyone. She said: "I did it up in my bedroom with a pair of my husband's nail scissors."

FOUR million dollars and 14 years of Sam Goldwyn's life went into the production of "Hans Christian Andersen," and Sam is going to see to it personally that it was worth it. After editing on the picture has been completed the Goldwyn studio will settle into months of quiet while Goldwyn follows his film round the world. He intends to leave only skeleton staffs in each studio department and shut down on production until *some time in* 1953.

* * *

EILEEN HERLIE is making a film comeback — this time as a comedienne. From playing Helen D'Oyly Carte opposite Peter Finch, she goes on to the lighthearted lead in "Father Knows Best," with Cecil Parker and Donald Wolfit.

* * *

JACK BENNY is starring at the Palladium and finding it harder than ever to live up to his reputation of being mean. He complained sadly, "I started off by being just ordinary mean. But to-day people expect me to be real low-down."

* * *

THE London premiere of "Kangaroo" won't exactly cause a rush of migrants to Australia if the comments aroused are any pointer. As an advertisement for life in the Great Outback, its droughts, its fires, its stampedes, its dust-storms, its hardships, and its accent of unrelieved loneliness have struck an awesome and discouraging note to town-bred Englishmen and green-country farmers alike, despite its "pioneering" setting. But as graphically filmed entertainment, England is finding it terrific. It is drawing full houses.

CITY FILM GUIDE

Films reviewed

CAPITOL.—"Jungle Jim in the Forbidden Jungle," adventure, starring Johnny Weissmuller, Angela Green. Plus ★ "Night Stage to Galveston," Western, starring Gene Autry, Virginia Huston. (Both re-releases.)

CIVIC.—★★ "Key Largo," thriller, starring Humphrey Bogart, Edward G. Robinson, Lauren Bacall. Plus "The Big Punch," mystery, starring Wayne Morris, Gordon MacRae, Lois Maxwell. (Both re-releases.)

EMBASSY.—★★★ "The Browning Version," drama, starring Michael Redgrave, Jean Kent, Nigel Patrick. Plus featurettes.

ESQUIRE.—★★★ "The River," technicolor drama of India, starring Esmond Knight, Arthur Shields, Patricia Walters. Plus featurettes.

LIBERTY.—★★★ "Singin' in the Rain, technicolor musical comedy, starring Gene Kelly, Debbie Reynolds, Donald O'Connor, Jean Hagen. Plus featurettes.

LYRIC.—★ "Inside the Walls of Folsom Prison," prison drama, starring Steve Cochran, David Brian, Ted de Corsia. Plus ★★ "It's Magic," romantic comedy, starring Doris Day, Jack Carson, Janis Paige. (Both re-releases.)

PALACE.—★★ "Desert Fox," wartime story of Rommel, starring James Mason, Leo G. Carroll, Jessica Tandy. Plus ★ "Elopement," romantic comedy, starring Clifton Webb, William Lundigan, Ann Francis.

PARK.—★ "On Dangerous Ground," thriller, starring Ida Lupino, Robert Ryan. (See review this page.) Plus "Brooklyn Orchid," romantic comedy, starring William Bendix.

PLAZA.—★★ "Anne of the Indies," technicolor pirate melodrama, starring Jean Peters, Louis Jourdan, Debra Paget. Plus "Woman in the Dark," crime melodrama, starring Penny Edwards, Ross Elliott.

REGENT.—★ "Kangaroo," technicolor drama of early Australia, starring Peter Lawford, Maureen O'Hara, Richard Boone. Plus "The Lady Says No," comedy, starring David Niven, Joan Caulfield.

SAVOY.—★★ "La Ronde," sophisticated French comedy, starring Danielle Darrieux, Anton Walbrook. Plus featurettes.

STATE.—★"Thunder on the Hill," suspense melodrama, starring Claudette Colbert, Ann Blyth, Robert Douglas, Michael Pate. Plus "Bedtime for Bonzo," romantic comedy, starring Ronald Reagan, Diana Lynn.

ST. JAMES.—★★★ "Singin' in the Rain," technicolor musical comedy, starring Gene Kelly, Debbie Reynolds, Donald O'Connor, Jean Hagen. Plus featurettes.

VICTORY.—★ "The Mob," mystery drama, starring Broderick Crawford, Betty Buehler. Plus "Harem Girl," romantic comedy, starring Joan Davis.

Films not yet reviewed

CENTURY.—"Close to My Heart," domestic drama, starring Ray Milland, Gene Tierney, Fay Bainter. Plus featurettes.

LYCEUM.—"Boots Malone," racing drama, starring William Holden, Johnny Stewart, Stanley Clements, Toni Gerry. Plus "Red Snow," war drama, starring Guy Madison, Gloria Saunders.

MAYFAIR.—"Strangers on a Train," mystery melodrama, starring Farley Granger, Ruth Roman, Robert Walker. Plus featurettes.

PRINCE EDWARD.—"Sailor, Beware," comedy, starring Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Marion Marshall. Plus featurettes.

VARIETY.—"Submarine Command," wartime drama, starring William Holden, Nancy Olson. Plus "Atomic City," pseudo-scientific drama, starring Gene Barry, Lydia Clarke.

Talking of FILMS

By M. J. McMAHON

★ ***On Dangerous Ground***

R.K.O.'s account of the reformation of a brutal cop by a sensitive blind girl gets this film off to a coldly exciting start, but later sequences fail to fulfil early promise and the movie subsides into routine melodrama.

Robert Ryan gives an honest study of an embittered, case-hardened detective whose manhandling of criminals earns him a stretch of duty in the backwoods.

There he is caught up in hunting down an unpleasant, half-witted murderer who has knifed the schoolgirl daughter of local farmer Ward Bond.

During the long chase across snowbound countryside with the murdered child's vengeful father, Ryan interrogates a blind girl who succeeds in rousing gentler feelings in the lawman.

Ida Lupino does her best with this difficult role, but by the time it becomes obvious that the killer is her young brother the melodrama is rather lurid.

In Sydney—Park.

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Special Supplement

It's Party Time

● Successful dances and parties don't just happen. They are planned. This special supplement will give you the latest ideas on young people's entertainment here and overseas.

The pictures on this page give some tips on how to be popular at parties. Pretty manners are as important as pretty faces and they last a lot longer.

MODERN YOUNG PEOPLE have found that the old-fashioned programme dance is a very good way to break the ice and help guests to get to know one another. If you are hostess, don't have the dances too long and don't have too-long intervals between dances. You can easily make some pretty or novel programmes yourself.

HOW TO SPOIL an evening before it's begun. The two young men are already bored, and they'll be too irritable to notice how the girls look when they do eventually appear. Don't keep your escort waiting.

HOW TO HAVE a perfect evening. The girls are well groomed and are on time. Their escorts are pleased to see them. A man won't think you are over-eager if you are on time. He'll just think that you are polite.

HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME. You'll enjoy yourself much better and make more friends if you join a group rather than try to give one boy or girl a rush. Don't wear a frock so fragile that you can't forget about what you are wearing and relax.

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Games help to break the ice

If you are giving a party, have a few games ready. They're a wonderful way to break the ice.

However, don't exhaust your guests by running one event after the other all night.

DON'T organise your guests into games if they'd rather be dancing. The games will be a complete flop.

If you decide on a game that requires people to take the limelight, make sure your guests aren't too shy. Let the less uninhibited set the pace and later the self-conscious ones will probably join in almost in spite of themselves.

Old-fashioned charades or acting games are very popular again.

There are several new versions, including one called simply "The Game," which is very popular in England this season.

The Game: Each guest writes a title or word on a slip of paper and passes it to his neighbor. Then one guest takes the floor to act the set task. No props are allowed. The actor may not speak.

A title may be split up and each word acted separately. Single words may be split into syllables. The actor first indicates the number of words by holding up that number of fingers. He then indicates which word he is going to act.

The title of a play is indicated by sketching in mid-air looped stage curtains. Mime the action of a movie-camera to indicate a film. An operatic gesture indicates a song, a book by reading the palms of hands held open together.

If one person seems hot on the trail the actor beckons him on with both hands. If he goes off at a tangent the actor warns him away. If a word is correct, but should be shortened, say "bringing" instead of "bring," the actor holds his hands close together. He moves his hands apart to indicate lengthening a word.

For example, take the song "That Old Black Magic." First the actor indicates his task is a song. He holds up four fingers to show there are four words. Pointing to the second finger he acts "old." When that is guessed he goes on to "black."

He might sit and strum an imaginary banjo. Some one might guess "negro" then—getting warmer—"black man." This is shortened to "black."

"Magic" might be indicated by a magician's trick, but the actor must indicate he is giving only the general idea and not the exact word.

Dumbo Crambo: Another version of charades. The players divide into two parties and one party goes out of the room. The others pick a word which has a fair number of possible rhymes in it, and then send out a messenger to tell the exiles that the word chosen rhymes with, say, "vote." The word chosen is, say, "goat." The party outside then enter and act in dumb show, whatever they think the word might be. If they decide it is "boat" they go through the motions of rowing. If they are wrong they are greeted with a storm of hisses and sent out to try again. This time they might try "note," going through the actions of writing. When they have guessed the correct word, parties changes places.

A "mystery thing" was the rage recently in Melbourne.

Those in the know answer "yes" or "no" about its identity, depending on whether the questioner's sentence ends with a vowel or a consonant.

For example, "the thing" is in Australia, but it's not in the Commonwealth.

PARTY GAMES. Even the old-fashioned ones, such as an apple-eating contest, are a good way to help guests relax and get to know each other.

The bewilderment of those not in the know increases as the game progresses, often over a period of months, because those in the know never reveal how the game is played.

Another version is played as "She likes sheep but she doesn't like lambs," "She likes lettuce but she doesn't like vegetables."

Her likes and dislikes depend, of course, on whether the word has double letters in it or not.

Sardines: Young folk will enjoy a different version of this old favorite. It will mean, however, using the whole house, with only dim lights. One girl goes out of the room to hide and five minutes later the others begin to search, separately. As soon as one finds the hidden girl he merely joins her, and so on, until they are all jammed into a cupboard, under a bed, or behind a curtain, waiting to pounce on the last one.

Balloon Football: This is played by two teams seated on chairs facing each other. The football is a large balloon which may be punted only with the hands of the players. Object is to prevent the balloon passing over the heads of the home team. Every time it passes over the heads of a team it constitutes a goal for the opposition.

Newspaper Dress Designers: Pair off everyone and give each boy two broadsheets of newspaper and a dozen pins. Set a time limit for them to pin a frock on their partner. All the girls parade, and the winner is chosen by popular vote.

Passing the Lemon: Stand all guests in a circle with hands behind backs. They pass a lemon, tucked under their chins, from one to the other, without dropping it. Those who miss the lemon fall out.

Animal Orchestra: This is a game for the rowdy. The leader has a baton (a roll of newspaper will do) and allots all players a part—cow, cock, cheetah, pekingese, nightingale, mule, goat, etc. He then conducts a musical performance in which the players to whom he points, one, two, or three at a time, or all together, emit the noises their parts indicate.

Guessing Legs: Hang a large sheet across the room about 18 inches from the ground, or high enough to show a girl's legs from the knees down. Each girl parades behind the sheet and the boys, in front, guess the owner of the legs. It is even funnier when the game is reversed and the girls guess who owns the male legs.

Bantam Boxing: If you have some young guests who really want to work off energy, tee them up for bantam boxing. Opponents stand on one foot and fold their arms, and at a given signal try to throw each other off balance.

Rafferty's Rules: Blindfold two guests and arm each with a club of rolled newspaper. They kneel down four feet apart and must remain in this position. One says, "Are you there, Rafferty?" The other says, "Shure, I'm here." The first says, "Then take that," and, judging the other's position by his voice, he takes a crack at him with his club. Then the second player begins the conversation. Each player must keep to his turn.

Pencil and paper

THESE are a good way to start the night, because when people are stuck with a query they naturally ask someone near them, and so the conversation stars.

A Limerick Contest: Set a time limit, say, 15 minutes, and get everyone to write a limerick about someone at the party. The best limerick is chosen by popular vote.

Draw a Song, Film, or Book Title: Give everyone paper and pencil, set a time limit, and let them draw a song, film, or book title. Pin the drawings on a wall and let everyone guess the titles. The most difficult one to guess is the winner.

The happy hostess

TO be a successful hostess you must organise everything to the last detail but never let it look that way.

Appoint someone as an unofficial master of ceremonies. If possible, co-opt a friend to carry round trays of savories, nuts, or drinks as often as necessary. A third helper to keep an eye on the kitchen will rid you of that worry.

Always tell guests what to wear, if they ask you. Some hostesses hesitate to say they are "dressing up," but it is much more embarrassing for a guest to arrive in a skirt and jumper and find everyone in evening frocks.

Introduce everybody, no matter how tedious it seems to you, and find time to talk to every guest.

Don't make the mistake of having a party just to return hospitality. In many cases you'll find you have asked people who have nothing in common.

A THOUGHTFUL HOSTESS greets her guests at the door instead of going ahead enjoying herself and letting them struggle in as best they can.

POPULAR GUEST is one who never outstays his welcome. Don't stay beyond the time you are asked unless you are quite certain the hostess wants you to.

The good guest

REPLY promptly to your invitation and come as near the specified time as possible.

Come suitably dressed. It is a compliment to your host or hostess to take some trouble with your dressing.

If you are a fairly close friend of the host, ring the day before and ask if anything is needed.

Don't corner someone else's boy-friend or girl-friend. And don't sit in the corner all night with your particular belle or beau.

Do as your hostess wishes. Offer to help with the supper, but if she plainly indicates she can manage, leave her alone.

Make a point of saying good-night to the parents, as well as the hostess. Write or phone next day to thank her.

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Platter parties are tops in popularity

A Charleston night is fun, and so is a progressive dinner

Winter is the time for home entertaining. Here are some "tried and tested" suggestions for coaxing your friends from their cosy hearths to your place.

These ideas range from elaborate costume parties to hints on how to arrange a record session. There are also some suggestions on novelty dances.

By AUDREY BUDD, staff reporter

PARTIES are not only fun to have—they are an opportunity for you to make a host of new friends.

Platter Parties.—If you have an open fireplace, you have the perfect setting for a record session. Everyone can bring his or her favorite discs, classical and popular. It is more interesting if you can borrow or buy some of the latest releases and some Continental records. Casual clothes suit the mood of the party.

Toasting crumpets on forks over the fire or toasting chestnuts adds to the fun. Something hot for supper completes the night.

Platter parties are tops in the United States. Dance music is "old-hat." Teen-age tastes run to "smooth progressive jazz," as served up by Stan Kenton and Dizzy Gillespie.

The latest singing sensation is, of course, Johnny Ray, the crying crooner.

Progressive Dinner-party.—Each course is served at a different home. Begin with cocktails or an appetiser, such as tomato juice, at one home; oysters or soup at another home; the main course at yet another; and sweets and coffee and the rest of the party at the last.

Guests could assemble at the first home at about 5.30 p.m. Make sure there is ample transport, and allow about three-quarters of an hour before moving to the next house. The food is served either buffet style or round the dinner table, depending on the number invited. For fun, the host and hostess for each course could wear chef's caps as they serve the meal.

Scavenger Hunt.—This is an old favorite with young people which can take up most of the evening before supper. Tell guests the nature of the party so they won't come in white ties or fragile ballerina frocks.

Pair off each boy and girl and give them a list of things to find. Make some of the clues difficult—a halfpenny with a 1926 date, a snail, a silverfish, a champagne cork—and some easy—a bobby-pin, a cotton thread, an apple seed, a blonde eyelash.

Set a time limit when everyone must be back whether the lists are filled or not. The first couple back with the completed list wins. A box of chocolates is a good prize.

Treasure Hunt.—A treasure hunt is run on similar lines. Each couple is given a piece of paper with a sentence containing a clue to where the treasure hunt starts. The first is generally an easy one, to get the game started, such as "under the rosebush." The leading couple must replace each clue for the others to find.

"CRY BABY" Johnny Ray is the latest singing sensation with popular-music fans. If you are having a platter party, make sure you have plenty of the newest records.

Fifteen clues, with the game running for about two hours, is a good plan. Again, chocolates are a good "treasure."

Surprise Party.—This is an old and popular idea, but if it is not planned carefully it can be disastrous. Take pity on the guest of honor and don't let a girl be caught with her hair in curlers. The thing to do is to swear all your guests to secrecy and then to trick the guest into dressing correctly, on the pretext that you are both going to a film or to visit a friend. Split-second timing is necessary. Get your guests to assemble and arrive all together.

Barbecue.—Summer is the most popular time for barbecues, but a midday Sunday barbecue in the country or at your home, if you are lucky enough to have a spit, is perfect on a sunny winter's day. Billy tea and chops, steak, or sausages charred in the flames have a wonderful flavor. A barbecue could be successful at night if you have ample wood to keep the fire going and plenty of rugs.

If you can rope in someone with a guitar or other instrument to accompany community singing, so much the better.

Costume dances

ALL guests must play their parts by really dressing-up. Anyone who treats the idea as "silly" should stay at home. The whole party—invitations, decorations, games, and supper—can be in keeping.

A Charleston Party.—Invite everyone to come dressed in the costume of the '20's—girls with long-waisted, short dresses, spit curls, long loops of pearls, and over-the-brow hats. If they can arrive in a "bomb" car of that period, so much the better. Boys should wear boaters, old blazers, bow-ties, and tight pants.

Have a few people who can really do the Charleston, to show the others, and have appropriate records. If stuck for a demonstrator, rope in some of the young folk's parents who are probably still expert at it.

Oriental Party. — Everyone comes in the nearest thing they have to Oriental costume—girls perhaps in kimonos with flowers in their hair and scuff on their feet and fluttering fans. Boys can wear pigtails, coolie hats, and gay shirts. Decorate the house with paper peach blossom and let everyone sit cross-legged on cushions on the floor for supper. You might try your hand at some simple Chinese dishes.

Continued on page 37

INFORMAL DANCES are fun, but both girls and boys like getting into their very best clothes for important balls and dances sometimes.

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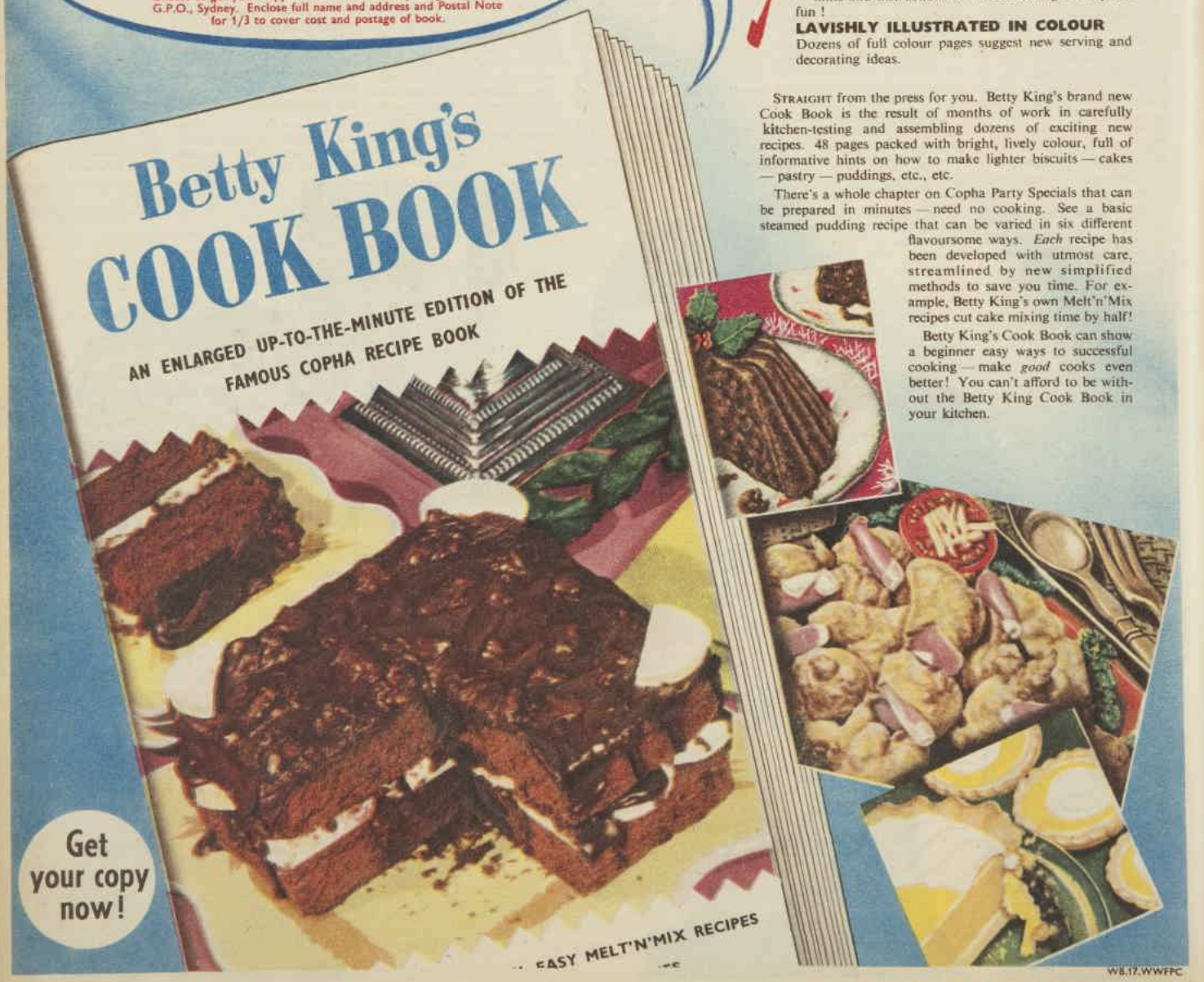

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THE YOUNG LOOK AFTER DARK

● *In beauty circles a girl's best friend is a clear, healthy complexion, especially these days, when natural charm is most admired.*

"PETAL WAVE" hair-do (above) features a low part starting at tip of eyebrow, and soft, forward bangs.

PROFILE VIEW of the "Petal Wave" (right), which is short enough to groom yet long enough to manage.

By CAROLYN EARLE

THE urge to grow up more quickly sometimes rushes girls into make-up more speedily than is desirable, but for the most part young things prefer to enjoy the freshness of youth before it slips away.

However, by the time they become eligible for social life, girls usually feel that they need more than a lipstick with which to give nature a boost—especially at night.

There are lovely cosmetic colors which are especially flattering for lasses who step out to parties and like to primp. Carefully chosen and applied deftly, delicate shades look fetching under the soft glow of night lights because they also look natural.

Make-up Pointers. The wrong foundation can take the bloom off a young face. A good complexion needs only a vanishing base cream or a light protective lotion and the faintest tracing of powder rouge.

Dot a sparing amount of the cream or lotion on the forehead, cheeks, tip of nose, chin, throat, and whatever area of shoulders, back, and arms is on view. Using the fingertips, spread it out to cover the full area.

Ask the girl at the cosmetic counter about foundation and rouge colors. Put on rouge with a wad of clean cotton-wool, carefully fading it around the edges.

You may use these without powder, but if a powder finish is preferred here's a little trick to take away any suggestion of a floury look.

After powdering, go over the surface with a pad of cotton-wool squeezed in cold water or skin tonic. Press this pad gently over the skin.

Postscript: Don't have the pad too wet, and be sure to press, not rub.

Eye Lore. It is commonsense to have eyebrows as well as bright eyes; the rule for brows is to keep them modelled. Overgrown brows are messy, over-plucked brows look hard.

Clear the space above the nose (inner points aligned with eye-corners). Remove wandering hairs, and with tweezers shorten the outer ends of the brows slightly if needed. For thin, pale brown brows—the eyebrow pencil.

To accent and deepen the color of your eyes, use a little mascara on the upper lashes only. Don't be ambitious.

When the mascara is dry, pick up a dot of cream on an orange-stick swabbed with cotton-wool with which to tip lashes, brows, and eyelids. The cream will take away any suggestion of an artificial look.

To make eyes seem longer, place the sharpened tip of an eyebrow pencil at the inner corner of each eyelid and draw a fine line with a slight upward tilt under the lashes.

Mouth Make-up. Because lipstick is the important color emphasis in your face, make a mouth that is natural. In short, draw the mouth nature gave you, but improve it with a few well-placed strokes if you can manage it.

The five separate stages in mouth make-up are: Apply lip color to dry lips, blot with tissue, then dust lightly with powder. Apply a second coat of color and blot again with tissue. Now you may moisten your lips.

Evening Hair-styles: The last word in hair designed by Michel, of New York, is pictured on this page. Take your choice, girls.

"ALL - AROUND COIFFURE" (above). Hair is brushed to one side in feathery fringe.

"PORTRAIT GIRL" (below) effects a puff and is brushed smoothly at back.

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PARTY TIME

Supper's served

• Winter suppers should be hot, simple, and appetising. Remember, cold nights and energetic dancing sharpen appetites.

MOST suppers nowadays are served buffet-style. Provide food which can be handled with a fork while the other hand is engaged in holding a plate.

It is essential to plan dishes which can be prepared in advance and reheated at the last moment.

You don't want to spend time in the kitchen which should be spent in helping your guests to enjoy themselves.

A punch-bowl is an attractive centre-piece for your supper-table.

Young people drink cold fruit punches even in the middle of winter, particularly if they have been dancing or playing games.

A spiced or rum punch would be appreciated by older guests.

If it is a late party, serve milk coffee or perhaps soup to the guests just when they are leaving. They will appreciate a hot drink before going out into the cold night.

Each recipe states the number of servings it yields and the whole menu has been planned for a party of 20.

All spoon measurements are level.

SPAGHETTI BOLOGNAISE

Quarter cup melted shortening, 1 clove of garlic, ½ cup chopped onion, 1½lb. minced steak, 1lb. ripe tomatoes (or 1 16oz. tin tomatoes), 1 cup water or stock, 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper to taste, pinch herbs, 1 pound spaghetti, 1 cup grated cheese, butter or substitute, tomato slices.

Cook finely minced garlic and onion in melted shortening until lightly browned. Drain off surplus shortening, add steak. Wash and chop tomatoes, add to meat mixture with water or stock, sauce, salt and pepper, and herbs. Cover closely and simmer 1½ hours or until meat is tender. Cook spaghetti in boiling salted water, drain and fold into meat mixture. Turn into greased ovenware dish (suitable for serving). Top with a thick layer of coarsely grated cheese, dot generously with butter or substitute. Add tomato slices to garnish. Bake in moderate oven until top is bubbly and brown. Serve piping hot. Sufficient for about 6 to 8 servings.

MACARONI MILANAISE

Three cups cooked macaroni, 1½ cups white sauce, ¾ cup tomato puree, 5 or 6 sheep's tongues (cooked, skinned, and chopped; if tongues are large, use only 4), 1 tablespoon grated onion, 1½ cups grated cheese, salt and pepper to taste, 1 tablespoon chopped parsley, 3 tomatoes, 4 rashers bacon.

Mix macaroni with hot, freshly made sauce. Fold in tomato puree, tongues, onion, and half the cheese. Season with salt and pepper, add chopped parsley. Fill into one or two greased ovenware dishes, cover top completely with sliced tomato, top with chopped bacon, rind removed. Sprinkle with balance of grated cheese. About 40 minutes before serving time place in moderate oven until thoroughly heated and until tomato and bacon are cooked and cheese melted and browned. Serve piping hot. Approximately 8 servings.

JAMBOLAYA

Two rashers of lean bacon, ¼ cup finely diced onion, 1 tablespoon flour, 1½ cups tomato puree or tomato juice, ½ cup water, ½ teaspoon paprika, salt and cayenne pepper to taste, 3 cups cooked rice, 1½ to 2lb. sausages, pinch herbs, parsley.

Remove rind from bacon, chop coarsely and fry lightly in its own fat until it starts to color. Add onion and brown lightly. Stir in flour, cook until it browns lightly. Stir in tomato puree or juice, water, paprika, salt and pepper, and continue stirring until boiling. Add cooked rice, simmer gently 10 minutes. Roll sausages in flour, prick well, fry gently until evenly browned and cooked through. Cut into chunky pieces about ¾in. to 1in. long. Fold into rice mixture with herbs and simmer 10 minutes or place over boiling water and cook ½ hour longer, stirring frequently. Serve garnished with parsley. Serves 6 to 8.

Note. Jambolaya may be prepared in advance and reheated just before serving. If this is done it may be necessary to add more moisture (tomato puree, tomato juice, or stock) just before reheating.

BAKED CORN AND SAUSAGE CASSEROLE

Three small tins corn, 3 or 4 rashers lean bacon, 1 dessertspoon finely chopped onion or 2 finely chopped shallots, 1½lb. beef sausages (fried in the usual way, then cut into ½in. slices), salt and pepper to taste, soft breadcrumbs, chopped parsley, butter or substitute.

Remove rind from bacon, chop into pieces and fry lightly in its own fat until it is lightly browned and crisp. Remove from fat, mix with the corn. Fry onion or shallot in the bacon fat until lightly browned, mix with the corn and bacon. Fold in sausage, season with salt and pepper. Turn into greased casserole, top thickly with soft breadcrumbs mixed with chopped parsley. Dot liberally with pieces of butter or substitute. Place in moderate oven until topping is crisp and brown and contents of dish thoroughly hot. Serves approximately 6 to 8.

CREAMED FISH ALEXANDRA

Two tins fish cutlets (12oz. size), or 1½lb. flaked, cooked fish, 3 tablespoons butter or substitute, 6 tablespoons flour, 3 cups milk, salt and cayenne pepper to taste, 1 tablespoon lemon juice or dry sherry, 1 or 2 tablespoons diced, parboiled red pepper (may be omitted), 1 dozen soft, cooked prunes (cooked without sugar), 12 strips of bacon large enough to wrap around prunes.

Drain and flake fish, removing any dark skin and bones. Melt butter or substitute, add flour, and cook 2 or 3 minutes without browning. Stir in milk, continue stirring until boiling. Season with salt and pepper, add lemon juice or sherry and diced red pepper. Mix with fish. Fill into ovenware dish suitable for serving, top with prunes wrapped in bacon. Place in moderate oven until bacon is cooked and top lightly browned. If desired, top with grated cheese and breadcrumbs mixed together. Serves 6 to 8.

FISH MORNAY LOAF

One small sandwich loaf, melted butter or substitute, 1½ to 2lb. smoked cod, 3 cups white sauce, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, salt and cayenne pepper to taste, 1 tablespoon (or more) chopped parboiled red pepper, 4 hard-boiled eggs, 1lb. cooked green peas, ½ to ¾ cup grated cheese.

Slice crusts off loaf, scoop an oblong well in loaf and continue removing crumb until a bread case remains with walls a bare ½in. thick. Brush loaf inside and out with melted butter or substitute and bake in moderate oven until lightly browned all over. Cook fish in usual way, remove skin and bones, and flake. Mix with freshly made, hot sauce. Season with lemon juice, salt, and cayenne pepper. Fold in red pepper, chopped hard-boiled eggs, and peas. Fill into bread case, top with grated cheese. Place in oven until heated through and browned on top. Serves approximately 8.

CHOCOLATE MARSHMALLOW TART

Twelve ounces shortcrust pastry, 2 packets chocolate dessert, 1½ cups sugar, 1½ cups water, 3 dessertspoons gelatine, pinch cream of tartar, peppermint essence to flavor, chocolate sprinkles to decorate.

Roll shortcrust thinly on floured board. Cut and line two 8in. tart plates. Prick base of each tart well with a fork, or cover base with greaseproof paper weighted with dried peas or beans to prevent pastry rising in centre. Bake in hot oven, allow to cool. Prepare chocolate dessert according to directions, allow to cool slightly, fill into pastry case. Place sugar, water, gelatine, and cream of tartar into a saucepan. Boil steadily 10 minutes. Allow to cool, beat until very thick and white, flavor with peppermint essence. Spread over chocolate mixture in tart case, top immediately with chocolate sprinkles. Chill before serving. Each tart cuts into 8 to 10 pieces.

FRUIT SALAD PAVLOVA

Six egg-whites, ½ teaspoon salt, 1½ cups sugar, 3 dessertspoons cornflour, 3 teaspoons vinegar, 2½ to 3 cups fruit-salad, ice-cream or whipped cream, mint leaves to decorate.

Beat egg-whites stiffly with salt, gradually add sugar, beating well after each addition. Continue beating until mixture is smooth and will hold its shape. Fold in cornflour and vinegar, mix well. Pour mixture into two 8in. sandwich tins which have been greased and lightly dredged with cornflour. Scoop centre slightly. Bake in very slow oven 1¼ to 1½ hours or until crisp and dry. Turn carefully out of tins, fill centres with fruit salad just before serving. Decorate with mint leaves. Serve with ice-cream or whipped cream. Each tart serves 6 to 8.

BANANA AND LEMON MERINGUE TART

Twelve ounces shortcrust pastry, 2 packets vanilla dessert, 3 tablespoons lemon juice, 2 dessertspoons grated lemon rind, 1 tablespoon butter or substitute, 4 bananas, 3 egg-whites, pinch salt, 6 tablespoons sugar.

Roll shortcrust thinly on floured

A PUNCH-BOWL makes an attractive centre-piece to a supper-table. Young people like cold drinks even in winter, particularly if they have been dancing.

TWO MENUS ARE SUGGESTED

SUPPER MENU No. 1
Spaghetti Bolognaise
Jambolaya
Creamed Fish Alexandra
Chocolate Marshmallow Tart
Banana and Lemon Meringue Tart

SUPPER MENU No. 2
Macaroni Milanaise
Baked Corn and Sausage Casserole
Fish Mornay Loaf
Fruit Salad Pavlova
Pineapple Chiffon Charlotte

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Cold weather calls for hot, appetising dishes

board. Cut and line two 8in. tart plates. Prick base of each tart well with a fork, or cover base with greaseproof paper weighted with dried peas or beans to prevent pastry rising in the centre. Bake in hot oven, allow to cool. Prepare vanilla dessert according to directions. While still hot fold in butter or substitute, lemon juice and rind, and chopped or sliced bananas. Cool slightly, fill into tart cases, allow to become cold. Beat egg-whites stiffly with pinch salt, gradually add sugar, and beat until sugar dissolves and mixture holds its shape. Spread half over each tart, place in very moderate oven until meringue is set and lightly browned. Serve cold. Each tart cuts into 8 to 10 pieces.

PINEAPPLE CHIFFON CHARLOTTE

Six or eight sponge fingers, 1 packet pineapple-flavored jelly, 3 dessertspoons gelatine, 1-3rd cup water, 3 eggs, ½ cup sugar, pinch salt, 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind, 1 cup shredded, cooked pineapple (or tinned pineapple), chopped red jelly and whipped cream to decorate.

Set a thin layer of pineapple jelly in bottom of 8in. shallow cake-tin (not sandwich-tin). When nearly set line sides with sponge fingers, pressing ends lightly into jelly. Chill until firm. Trim off ends of fingers which project above edge of tin, crumble the trimmings of sponge and mix with balance of pineapple jelly. Fill into tin when beginning to thicken, chill until firm. Meanwhile soak gelatine in water. Cook egg-yolks, half the sugar, salt, lemon rind, and pineapple over boiling water for 15 minutes, stirring frequently. Add soaked gelatine, stir while cooling over bowl of ice. Fold in egg-whites beaten stiffly with balance of sugar. When beginning to thicken fill into tin. Chill until firm. Unmould on to serving dish, decorate with chopped red jelly and whipped cream. Serves approximately 8.

PARTY PUNCH

(Sufficient to allow 2½ servings for about 20 persons.)

One cup water, 2 cups sugar, 1 cup freshly made, strong tea, 1 cup raspberry syrup (type used as ice-cream topping), 2 cups orange juice, 1 cup lemon juice, 2 cups tinned pineapple pieces and accompanying syrup, ¾ to 1 cup maraschino cherries, 1 quart soda water, iced water, thin slices orange, lemon, and cucumber, and mint springs to decorate.

Boil sugar and water 5 minutes. Add tea, fruit syrup, orange and lemon juice, pineapple pieces with syrup, and cherries. Allow to stand until just before serving. Add soda water and sufficient iced water to make 1½ gallons, pour into punch-bowl, decorate with orange, lemon, and cucumber slices, and mint sprigs.

CLARET CUP

(About 25 to 30 servings.)

Four slices chopped pineapple, 1 small tin chopped, sliced peaches, 2 thinly sliced oranges, 1 small sliced lemon, 4 or 5 thin slices cucumber, 2 tablespoons sugar, 4 tablespoons brandy, 2 tablespoons maraschino syrup (may be omitted), 2 quarts claret or burgundy, 2½ pints soda water, ice cubes.

Place pineapple and peaches in large bowl with oranges, lemon, cucumber, and sugar. Allow to stand 4 or 5 hours. Add brandy, maraschino syrup, and claret or burgundy. Chill 1 hour. Just before serving add soda water and ice cubes.

HOT SPICED PUNCH

(Makes about 2 quarts.)

One cup sugar, ½ cup water, 2 sticks of cinnamon, ½ lemon, 1½doz. cloves, 4 cups hot fruit juice (orange or lemon or pineapple, or a mixture), 1 quart light red wine, lemon or orange or thin pineapple slices to decorate.

Boil sugar and water for 5 minutes with cinnamon, sliced lemon, and cloves. Strain, add hot fruit juice. Heat (do not boil) the wine and add it to the fruit-juice syrup. Keep hot over boiling water until ready to serve, then transfer to heated punch-bowl (not glass), and add lemon or orange or pineapple slices.

Your first party

● When you are hostess for the first time you will probably want to do as much of the supper as you possibly can yourself.

FOR this reason we give help with simple savories, which most experienced cooks would find easy.

Pass round dishes of nuts, sweets, and savories from time to time early in the evening, or leave them for guests to help themselves.

SAVORY SUGGESTIONS

Plumped Prunes: Simmer dessert prunes in water to cover until plump and tender. Do not add sugar. Allow to cool. When cold, fill with softened cottage cheese.

Curled Celery: Cut fresh young celery stalks into 2½in. lengths. With a small, sharp knife slit half-way down, making cuts ⅛in. apart. Drop into iced water until ready for use.

Radish Roses: Thoroughly wash and lightly scrape round red radishes. Make 6 or 8 cuts nearly through each radish, drop into iced water. Stand in a cool place 1 to 2 hours.

Savory Squares: Trim crusts from sandwich loaf slices (¼in. thick), cut into squares 2in. to 2½in. in size. Brush top and sides with melted butter, place on greased oven tray. Bake in hot oven until crisp and lightly browned. When cold, top with any savory mixture desired.

SANDWICH IDEAS

If you feel supper is not supper without at least one platter of sandwiches, try some of the following suggestions.

Open-Faced Sandwiches: These may be prepared in the following way:

Cut ¼in. slices of bread into any desired shape—circles, squares, diamonds, etc. Arrange filling on top, first spreading lightly with butter.

Finger Sandwiches: Make sandwiches in usual way, trim crusts, cut into finger-lengths. Using one slice of white bread and one slice of brown bread for each sandwich gives an attractive effect.

SANDWICH FILLINGS

Rub hard-boiled egg-yolks to a smooth paste, flavor with anchovy paste, pinch of paprika, onion juice, and salt.

Chop shelled prawns finely, moisten with mayonnaise, season with salt and pepper.

Spread bread lightly with peanut butter, add a layer of chopped mustard pickle, or finely minced sweet pickled onion, or finely diced celery, or thin tomato slices (well drained).

Coarsely grated processed cheese with finely diced celery or gherkin; add a dash of mayonnaise if desired.

Finely minced cooked rabbit mixed with chopped cooked bacon or ham and mayonnaise or white sauce.

Mashed cooked liver and chopped cooked bacon flavored with mustard.

Scrambled egg mixed with an equal quantity of mashed sardine, seasoned with salt and cayenne pepper.

***BUFFET TABLE.** Good winter dishes are Spaghetti Bolognaise, creamed Fish Alexandra, Jambolaya, followed by chocolate marshmallow tart, and banana and lemon meringue tart for those with a sweet tooth.*

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HITTIN' THE TRAIL

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* *At similar degrees of temperature.*

RICH yet MILD

Look for the YELLOW packet.

VL19

DOUBLE DUTY

A lace or net overskirt is a wonderful way to enlarge your party wardrobe. It will make your new frock do double duty for you. Wear it with a stole or a kerchief.

A SOFT net or filmy lace overskirt will give a new lease of life to the frock which has become "that old thing" and badly needs a pick-up. Even if you consider yourself a duffer at sewing, you'll be able to manage to make one or both of these attractive overskirts.

The circular skirt shown in lace can also be made in net or the gathered net skirt in lace.

In fact, any diaphanous material, such as tulle or organdie, would be entirely suitable.

The gathered net skirt is double thickness.

If net is used for the circular skirt, it can be three thicknesses. One of the most attractive ways with net is graduated shades of the same color.

Another color suggestion is white or pastel net or lace over a black, brown, or navy frock. Or—equally striking—black or brown lace or net over a light-colored frock.

However, the color combination you choose will probably depend on whether you are planning a new outfit or transforming an old one.

THE CIRCULAR SKIRT IN LACE

Most lace is 35in. wide. You will need 5¾yds. to make a circular skirt and three-cornered kerchief.

Diagram B will make cutting out simple.

Measure a circle 10in. in diameter in the middle of a large piece of paper, as shown in diagram B. From the circumference of the circle mark a wider circle the skirt-length distance away. (The average skirt-length is 30in.)

Use this as a pattern for cutting out the lace. Unless you are very tall it should not be necessary to join the material.

Cut the largest possible triangle from the remaining material for the kerchief, as shown in diagram B.

Sew up the back seam of skirt only, leaving a coat-like opening in front. Attach to a 1in. band of velvet at the waist.

This pattern is for a 28in. waist, but it can easily be adjusted by making the inner circle in Diagram B slightly smaller.

Turn up a hem only if the type of lace you have used needs it. Many laces fall more gracefully if not hemmed.

GATHERED NET SKIRT

Even more simple is the gathered net skirt.

Net is generally 54in. wide. Three and a quarter yards are needed for a double skirt and 1¾yds. for the stole.

You will need two 54in. widths for the skirt.

If your skirt-length is 30in., cut off two 60in. sections and fold over as shown in diagram A.

Join back seam.

Gather between arrows as shown in diagram A and attach to velvet band.

Do not hem skirt, as it spoils the hang of the net.

Fold the remaining 1¾yds. of net to make a double stole.

GATHERED NET SKIRT and matching stole create a new party frock. Original frock was slim-skirted with a matching bust-length bolero.

LACE SKIRT cut in a perfect circle can transform a plain ballerina dress. It is worn with a matching three-cornered kerchief.

DIAGRAM A for the gathered net skirt, at left. Two widths of 54in. net are joined (see broken line) and folded over to give the skirt double thickness.

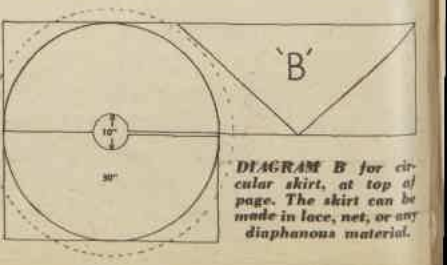

DIAGRAM B for circular skirt, at top of page. The skirt can be made in lace, net, or any diaphanous material.

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PARTY TIME

For Special Evenings

By BETTY KEEP

● Here is a trio of dresses designed for the young. One is ankle-length and two are short-skirted. The models all have a new approach to skirt fullness —moderate rather than ultra-bouffant.

I consider the basic idea for all young well-dressed partygoers is uncluttered simplicity. Daring and flamboyant fashions do not go with fresh young faces.

Accessories play an important part in the ensemble. My advice is keep them simple.

With a short-skirted dress leg-grooming and the correct shoes become doubly important. A pair of well-groomed legs and pretty feet are as much an asset at a party as a pretty face.

● For romantic evenings an ankle-length dance dress, above, made in sunshine-yellow net. The shaped strapless bodice is finished with a matching rose. Tiny frills trim the bodice and skirt.

● Crisp milk-white pique for the "don't dress" party frock, left. There's a tiny black bow at the throat and a bodice to mould the young figure. Perfect to wear now and right on into summer evenings.

● Feminine lines and curves for the taffeta model, right, with a just-off-the-shoulder scooped-out neckline. The skirt has all-round fullness. A cluster of flowers is worn tucked into the wide belt.

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First of a series of special articles

YOUTH SUMS UP

● You're going to a party. You haven't been to many and on the whole they've been disappointing. If that's the way it has been with you, the comments by two young people on these pages may help. The girl is 17 and is in her last year at school. The boy is 18 and has been at work two years.

The boy said:

THE main thing at a party is to mix.

If you're shy and sit alone in a corner you'll be a dead loss. When a boy is not dancing he should sit with a girl or any boys who happen to be over.

Girls are more unlucky. They have to wait to be asked.

The pretty ones can get away with never opening their mouths. But the most popular girls with boys are those who dance well and are easy to talk to.

The worst thing a hostess can do is not to introduce guests. She should introduce everyone all round first off, get one of the boys to look after one of the girls, and start the ball rolling.

When you arrive you should greet your hostess and her mother, or whoever happens to be giving the party.

You should always have a dance with your hostess. It's a duty, so get it over early.

If a hostess is old—for instance, a girl's mother—it's better to wait until a lot of other boys have asked her to dance. Then she might refuse and you'll get out of it. But you must make the gesture.

I like to take a partner because I more or less have control of her. If a partner doesn't give you first consideration, it means that she lets someone cut you out.

That starts a vicious circle of boys cutting one another out, and the evening goes down the drain.

Wear dinner clothes at a formal party or a dance held in a public place. If the party is at a private home, a dark suit is best.

If it's informal—generally this has been thought up on the spur of the moment—casual clothes will do.

The worst party I ever went to was when I was very young and I was in a grey suit, while every other man was in tails. It was terribly formal—absolutely the works—and I was never so embarrassed in my life.

The best parties for girls are the big ones where they have to dress.

For that matter, girls worry too much about clothes, which aren't important so long as they're reasonably smart.

When a girl looks nice, tell her so. It's usually a good thing to remark on a new dress.

But boys could strangle girls who don't know how to accept a compliment.

You say: "That's a nice dress," and they pull a face and say, "Oh, this old thing! I've had it for years."

Extremely low-cut dresses are definitely a mistake.

A girl must care what she looks like. After all, it's insulting when she has a date with you and obviously has taken no trouble.

When a girl is plain she has to have something the pretty ones haven't got. But to be pretty and neglect herself is much worse than being plain.

Anyone who is plain and does nothing about it is the end—just a drack.

Girls who chase boys and make it pretty obvious are not appreciated at all.

In regard to parties, boys never think anything of parents, except the impossible ones who nag about where you're going.

"Be sure you bring her back on the tick of 12," they tell you, and then they wait up.

Mothers are worse than fathers. Fathers never seem to care, so long as the girls don't come in at 5 a.m.

About the only way a girl can flatter a boy is to compliment him on the way he's dressed.

Smoking and drinking are dreadful for a girl until she has left school—and the same goes for a boy.

Drinking to excess is just plain showing off.

Is it the thing these days to kiss a girl good-night? Of course. Girls expect it. It's only polite.

Continued on next page

"THE BOY I left behind me." If a young man takes you to a party, give him a fair amount of your time and attention. If you leave him sitting, he'll begin to think about the other girls he'd rather have brought.

Solving your catering problem

Many hostesses find it difficult to judge what quantities of food they should order for parties.

HERE are the most-needed quantities for winter parties.

Suggested quantities are for about 20 people. They may be multiplied or divided as required.

One 2lb. sandwich loaf will cut into 36 slices, making 18 double sandwiches, which will again cut into 72 small sandwiches—averaging three to four per person.

A quarter of a pound of butter creamed until very soft with a quarter of a pound of table margarine and a little warmed milk is enough to spread 36 slices of bread.

A quarter of a pound of tea makes approximately 40 cups. This allows two cups per person.

Two and a half pints of milk are ample for 40 cups of tea. Three-quarters of a pound of loaf sugar, approximately 75 pieces, should be sufficient for tea, or 1lb. crystal sugar.

To make coffee for 20, allowing about 1½ cups per person, you will need three-quarters of a gallon of milk and three-quarters of a gallon of water. Bring to the boil and add 3 to 4oz. pure coffee (according to strength required) tied securely in clean muslin with 1 level teaspoon salt. An old oatmeal bag is excellent for the purpose. Drop the bag into the milk and water just before it boils and swirl around well. Simmer for 3 minutes. Remove bag and keep coffee hot, but do not boil again.

Allow 4 to 5 cocktail frankfurts and 2 or 3 sausage rolls or meat balls per person.

When preparing pastry for savories, remember that a recipe calling for ½lb. shortcrust pastry means pastry made with ½lb. flour. Half a pound of shortcrust pastry makes approximately 2½ dozen small pastry-cases or 2 dozen small sausage rolls.

To make filling for 2 dozen small sausage rolls: Place ½lb. sausage meat into a saucepan with 1 level tablespoon flour, 1 tablespoon tomato sauce, 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce, 1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley, 1 small chopped onion, pinch herbs, salt and pepper to taste. Stir over heat until mixture boils, and continue stirring occasionally (to prevent sticking) for 6 to 8 minutes. Spread on a flat plate to cool.

Here's a quick way to make 2 dozen sausage rolls. Roll ½lb. shortcrust pastry to an oblong sheet about 1-8in. thick. Cut into strips about 3in. wide. Spread cold sausage mixture down centre of each strip, moisten one edge and fold both edges in over meat, moistened edge pressed lightly on dry edge. Place rolls folded side down on greased oven-tray, mark into 2in. lengths with back of a knife.

"She'll remember me. I'm the boy who danced every dance with her last night."

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A boy and a girl discuss candidly what makes for popularity at parties

The girl said:

By Kay Melaun

IT'S the fashion these days for girls to kiss boys good-night after a party.

Up to a point this is all right, but it's too sudden when a boy is taking a girl out for the first time.

A good-night kiss is all right after a boy and girl have been out together a couple of times. They know each other well by then.

Mostly, however, the kissing depends on the girl and boy.

The worst thing a hostess can do is to neglect her guests.

Some young hostesses behave as though it was someone else's party and spend their time dancing with boys they're keen about, while the guests are just left to fend for themselves. They can be having a miserable time for all the hostess knows or cares.

Being rude to a hostess' parents either by ignoring them or making some nasty remark is just about the worst thing a guest can do.

On the whole, no one worries much about parents. They are taken for granted.

I don't know what parents think of their children's parties. I suppose once they agree to having one they just steel themselves to it.

They mostly ask some of their own friends and talk to them during their children's parties.

It's strange, though. Once Mummy was asked to have a dance by one of the girl's fathers. She came and asked me if I thought the boys and girls would mind.

Of course they didn't. No one noticed them.

Although small parties are fun, big evening-frock ones are best.

Girls don't expect a lot, but when a boy is taking you to a long-frock party a car or taxi is a must. Trailing round the streets dirties your dress.

Some boys bring flowers and some don't. It's lovely to get them, but it doesn't matter a great deal.

A Yankee shout is a good thing in a way, because boys don't get much pocket money. They don't when they're still at school, anyway.

If they've left school and have jobs they should pay for a girl when they ask her out.

Girls of 14 and boys of 15 or 16 are old enough to go to parties. Well, that's what I did and how things were when I was quite young.

Now I think it's funny to see little boys and girls of that age going to parties.

When I first went to parties we were all happy to have simple things to eat like sausage rolls.

Now we expect scrummy things like chicken and rice. I suppose it's because we're older and experienced.

Fruit cup and soft drinks—and beer for the boys—are enough for drinks, even at a big dance.

Anyone who really drinks would be out of it among my friends.

A girl who went out with a boy who drank too much would have a miserable time worrying, especially if he was going to drive her home.

Being a good dancer is one of the biggest helps at parties.

THE GIRL who'd rather have stayed at home. One of the worst things a boy can do at a party is hold a gossip session on sport or the office with his pals while his partner sits cooling her heels.

If you can't dance well, you're so conscious of being awkward that you're not able to concentrate on anything else.

If you're left standing and no boys ask you to dance, there's nothing much you can do except look as though you're enjoying yourself, even though you feel miserable.

Every girl will dance with the drippiest boy at a party rather than be left standing.

Good looks don't influence me very much. The not-so-nice-looking boys are usually much more fun than the terribly handsome ones.

You have more fun at a party if you mix. You find that one boy is brainy and another is fun, and you enjoy the variety.

When you dance with the same boy all the time you can easily get stuck with him.

Flattery is a good popularity-getter up to a point. A girl can flatter a boy best by listening to him talk about himself.

I know some who talk away about themselves, thoroughly enjoying it. If you listen they talk all the more and think you're wonderful.

A boy flatters a girl by saying he likes her new frock or that she looks pretty.

I don't think girls like boys to tell them they're clever; but then I wouldn't know for sure, because no one has ever told me I am.

Popular dances

Continued from page 29

Mexican Party. — The girls wear vivid skirts, black, fringed stoles, and hooped earrings; the boys, gay sombreros, colorful boleros, droopy moustaches, and gay Mexican striped blankets. Cactus, in little pot, and large straw mats on the floor help create atmosphere. There are many recipe books which have Mexican recipes you could serve for supper.

Come as you are.—Guests wear the clothes they had on when they were invited.

Come as a book, song, picture, or film. — These provide plenty of scope for imaginative costumes and a prize can be awarded for the best.

Comic-strip Party. — All guests as characters from comics — Mandrake, Ginger Meggs, Teena, and so on.

Bobby-sox Party.—Girls in short sox and flatties, sweaters, and skirts. Boys in sloppy joes and blue jeans.

Novel ideas

GENERALLY the most popular form of party with young people is one where as soon as everyone arrives records are put on and dancing begins and goes on until the party breaks up.

A sing-song round the piano, as long as the pianist is really good, is a useful way to fill in time until everyone is there, but don't let the singing straggle on all night.

Include some novelty dances to give variety to the evening. You could even draw up a programme and have a master of ceremonies to call each dance.

An old-fashioned barn dance or a Jolly Miller is as good a way as any for helping your guests to mix.

Other novelty dances are:

Balloon Dance.—Let each couple pick a balloon from a basket and then dance with it between their foreheads. The couple who holds the balloon longest wins.

Newspaper Dance.—Supply each couple with a sheet of newspaper. As soon as the music stops they must put it down on the floor and jump on it. Any pair whose feet are not completely on the paper are out.

The Forfeit Dance.—Stop the music at intervals during the dance and eliminate each time. For example, all boys wearing red ties sit out; all girls with curly hair; everyone with freckles on his nose, etc.

The Cinderella Dance.—Girls throw one shoe into the centre of the room and the boys dance with the girl whose shoe matches the one they find.

The Leap Year Dance.—Girls ask the boys.

If the parties are being held for charity, then plan the party for a definite event—"St. Valentine's Day," "Hallowe'en," or simply a "winter" or "spring" dance.

You could call it a Snow Ball and have a white cotton-wool snow-man the centre of attraction. Ask the girls to wear white dresses if possible, and present them all with a snow-flake of cotton-wool to tie on their wrists on arrival. Invitations could be sprinkled with silver and cotton-wool.

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Voice of a Dove

MRS. HOPKINS folded her hands in her lap. Her face was adamant. "No, I've had my lesson," she declared. "Not for anyone will I put my eyes in a teacup again."

"Oh, you shouldn't take it as seriously as all that," Sarah protested. She had to admit she was a little curious herself to know Mrs. Hopkins' forecast.

But Mrs. Hopkins shook her head.

"Plenty can happen at that party. There's going to be twenty sit down to dinner, including stage folk from 'Meadowsweet.' Oh, yes, plenty can happen. But I'm not foretelling it."

"Oh, you're not a sport," grumbled Petunia. But Mrs. Hopkins only laughed, and that was fairly representative of the changed atmosphere in the house, due, Sarah thought, mostly to Oliver's cheerfulness. It was a happy relief after the gloom of the previous week.

Jennie was still quiet and a little difficult, but there had been no more nightmares and she was slowly becoming more responsive. The party hung before her like a light on a Christmas tree.

Certainly there was Venetia's odd behaviour about locking her bedroom door at nights, but that was probably due to a purely private quarrel with Oliver. Perhaps she was still sulking about the mink scarf.

But, apart from Venetia, things had returned to normal. Oliver resumed his habitual working hours as if he had never had that brief emotional breakdown; Tim went in and out without any explanation.

Particularly in the evenings he disappeared, and, when once Sarah was goaded into asking him where he went, he answered, twinkling, "Pub crawling. Like to come one night?" She was so indignant at this apparent aimlessness, as if all his previous anxiety had been a pose, that she didn't even answer.

It was the day before the dinner-party and two days before Jennie's party that Sarah took Jennie to the cafe in the Gardens again. She had no thought of Oliver in mind this time, but only that the fine weather might not last much longer and that the sunshine was better for Jennie than the atmosphere of the house.

They called in to see Hamlet on the way, and he condescended to be stroked and petted by Jennie while Aunt Florence had Jane bring out the cake especially made for the party.

It was a large cake iced in pink and white, and Jennie, round-eyed, spelled out "Happy Birthday" and counted the eight candles."

"But it's not my birthday," she gasped.

Aunt Florence smiled with gentle benevolence. "No, dear. We're just pretending. This is really because of the cake you didn't have on your birthday. See, you have to blow those candles out in one blow. So you'd better start practising."

Jennie picked up Hamlet and he squawked in her tight clutch. Her fierce eyes looked over his furry body.

"But it's a lie about my birthday," she declared.

"I know, dear," Aunt Florence admitted. "But I did so want there to be a cake with candles. Don't disappoint me."

Jennie said, "I don't usually tell lies," gruffly. Then she added, "I suppose the other children won't know any different. I guess it will be all right."

Apart from the tell-tale fierceness of her eyes, she looked quite unconcerned.

"Your Aunt Florence isn't very old for her age," Jennie observed with her disconcerting maturity as she and Sarah walked along the edge of the Serpentine.

"How do you mean?" Sarah asked.

"She truly likes candles on a cake, doesn't she?"

"So do you, don't you?"

Jennie scuffed at the worn path. Her hands were tight in her pockets.

"It isn't good to like things too much, because that makes you lose them."

Continued from page 6

"Why, Jennie, whoever told you that?"

"My father did, but I know it's true, too. I don't like anything. Or anybody," she added with finality.

The adult cynicism was a little shocking. Sarah had to treat it with humor.

"Not even me, darling?"

Jennie flicked her an upward glance. Then she scuffed harder than ever. "Don't say those things," she ordered. "They're silly."

Sarah tweaked one of Jennie's plaits gently.

"It's perfectly safe to like me, darling. Because you couldn't lose me even if you tried. What do you say we find some chestnuts and take them home to roast? Look, we can fill our pockets."

SO it was with pockets bulging that Sarah and Jennie arrived at the cafe for tea. And there was Oliver sitting at a table with a dark-haired young man.

Oliver, clearly, was in an excellent humor. "Well, well, look who's here!" he exclaimed. "Come, Sarah, join us. This is my friend, Brian Page. Miss Sarah Stacey and my niece, Jennie."

He added, beaming genially, "I've asked Brian to come along to our party on Wednesday evening, Sarah. He's interested in the theatre. I thought he'd like to meet a few of the gang."

Sarah looked at the dark young man. He seemed very youthful, not more than twenty-one. He also seemed overcome by Oliver's friendliness. Oliver himself was getting a tremendous kick out of being pleasantly patronising to the young man.

"This little affair on Wednesday will introduce you to a few people," he went on. "Sonia Helm and Jack Lye will be there. And Rachel Massey. She's over from the States. You've heard of her?"

"I should say so."

"She's accepted the lead in my new play," Oliver observed. "Sarah, are you going to have tea or coffee? Milk for Jennie, of course. Jennie's having a party, too. Aren't you, kitten?"

"Yes, Uncle Oliver."

"She's got the grandest dress. This is a very precious child, Brian. She's the only Foster descendant."

Afterwards, when the dark young man had gone, Oliver walked home with Sarah. He swung Jennie on to his shoulder and gave his jolly laugh.

"There, you're higher than houses. Well, Sarah, it's going to be quite a good party, I think."

Sarah said tentatively, "I don't want to interfere, but do you think Venetia is fit to have such a big party?"

"Oh, you mean she's still sulking about that mink scarf," Oliver said. "Hey, kitten, don't hang on so tight. You won't fall."

"Not exactly that," Sarah said. She couldn't approach the subject of the locked bedroom door. "She seems rather nervy; not herself."

"Her throat's worrying her again," Oliver said. "She's sleeping badly. I want Lionel to have another look at her, but she's being a bit stubborn. I think the party will do her good. And she'll be all right when I let her in on a secret. I may decide to buy her that mink scarf after all."

"But you said you couldn't afford it."

"I know. I was very despondent about my play then. I thought I'd never write again, as you know. But now I feel different. A writer has these moods."

That night Sarah heard Tim telling Oliver that he would be leaving shortly.

"I've just got a short research job to finish here," he said casually, "then I'm going off into the country to write my book."

So he was planning to write a book! Sarah hadn't known that. Somehow she had thought he never had two serious ideas.

But hadn't he come to solve what he considered a mystery? Had this little bit of detective work been just for amusement and now, making no progress, he was abandoning it?

"Are you, indeed?" Oliver said. "We'll be sorry to lose you. I will, anyway. What with Eliot gone and Venetia not too fit — well, of course you know best." His voice was genuinely regretful. He turned to look across the room at Sarah.

"Sarah, do you hear Tim's leaving us?"

"Yes, I heard," Sarah answered calmly. She was aware of Tim's inquisitive gaze on her.

Please turn to page 40

As I read the Stars

By EVE HILLIARD

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Hospitality, party-going, and party-giving enliven July 5 and 6. July 8 could involve you in an argument over finances. Straighten it out on July 10.

TAURUS (April 21-May 20): Expeditions, interviews, correspondence on July 7 may prove fruitless. Gather your forces for another attack on July 11, taking plenty of ammunition along with you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21): Rapid progress with a project on July 6 may blind you to certain drawbacks, which will demand careful handling on July 9. Walk cautiously.

CANCER (June 22 - July 22): Sidestep any attempt at an accounting in personal matters on July 7 because neither mind nor vitality will be at top. July 11 gives you an ideal opening. It would be better to wait for it.

LEO (July 23-August 22): Any opportunity presented on July 7 should be grabbed. If tempted to be extravagant on July 9, refuse to obey the impulse; you're certain to regret it.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): July 6 is ace-high for group interests, outdoor life, sports, and pastimes. Miss Virgo may develop her acquaintance with the dashing stranger.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Don't push those business or social plans on July 7; you'll either meet with a refusal or people will prove unreliable. Postpone action until July 10.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Cover all the ground you can on July 5 and 6, then July 8 won't floor you. Refusal to compromise brings a reward on July 10.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 20): Someone's loss may be your gain on July 7, when you may save a difficult situation. Guard all belongings carefully on July 9.

CAPRICORN (December 21-January 19): Happy relations with the opposite sex may make July 5 memorable with wedding bells and moonlight and roses for the young, and stepping out for their elders.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 19): Conversations on July 6 could give you a brainwave with important business results. Try a new sideline on July 7.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Want to speculate a little? July 5 might ring the bell. Should you be romantic July 11 offers thrills and excitement.

[The Australian Women's Weekly presents this astrological diary as a feature of interest only, without accepting any responsibility whatsoever for the statements contained in it.]

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Ruddy ☐	Hazel ☐	REDHEAD Light ☐ Dark ☐
Freckled ☐	Brown ☐	GREY HAIR If grey hair, check to-mer hair colouring above and here ☐
Olive ☐	Black ☐	
Deep Olive ☐	LASHES Dark ☐	
Tan ☐	Med. ☐ Light ☐	
Deep Tan ☐	SKIN: Oily ☐	
If Pale check above & here ☐	Dry ☐ Normal ☐	

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Voice of a Dove

Continued from page 39

TIM investigating a mystery, indeed! Sarah thought. He had invented it to while away the time.

But there was a mystery. She knew that herself. How would she fare when even Tim, her very unstable prop, had gone?

"Where do you plan to write your book?" she asked.

"In Cornwall. Fellow's sold me a cottage in a place called Ruan Minor, near Lands End." He paused and added with apparent irrelevance. "I hear the wildflowers there are particularly lovely."

If he thought that by the mention of wildflowers he would make her homesick for the country, he was absolutely right. She had a moment of intense longing for windy skies and the fragrance of wet earth and green hedgerows.

"The roof will probably leak," she said.

"I haven't a doubt. And there'll be an ancient Cornish curse combined with no plumbing."

"The latter could easily be the curse," Oliver observed, giving his hearty laugh. "Well, we'll be a quiet house, won't we, Sarah?"

With Venetia's door locked at night, the piano in the attic silent, and no one but herself to heed Jennie's nightmare?

"Cheer up," came Tim's exasperating voice. "I'm not going for a few days. I've got this job to finish and an important luncheon date to keep. Then let the wild storms do their worst."

Sarah didn't make any attempt to see him alone later to find out the real reason for his leaving. If he wanted to walk out, that was his business. She wasn't going to show she was sorry.

In the next few days, Sarah decided that Oliver must have told Venetia about the possibility of her getting the mink scarf after all, for she seemed brighter.

She walked about more briskly and didn't start if she met anyone unexpectedly in a passage. She even began to discuss what she would wear to the dinner-party. But she still locked her door at nights, Petunia reported.

Sarah tried to tell herself that this was her method of getting the mink scarf. But she couldn't forget the furtive nervousness in Venetia's eyes that had nothing to do with possessions.

But with two parties on her hands Sarah hadn't very much time to worry about Venetia or Tim. She was helping both Aunt Florence and Mrs. Hopkins.

The day of the dinner-party, she gave Jennie a holiday from lessons and spent the entire morning in the kitchen, to the great delight of Petunia, who liked, she said, a different face to talk to.

"We're all strung up about this do to-night," she said. "Mrs. Oliver won't have no candles on the table. Mr. Oliver wanted them, but she says no, let's have plenty of light. She said candles would always remind her of that last dinner when your aunt's ring disappeared. So she's put them away herself where no one will find them."

She added curiously, "I wonder what did happen about that ring."

"It's none of your business," Mrs. Hopkins said sharply. "Get on with your work and don't gossip. What are you wearing to-night, Miss Stacey, if it's not impertinent to ask?"

"Of course it's not impertinent, Mrs. Hopkins. I was going to wear my grey chiffon again, but Aunt Florence says I must get a new dress, she's ashamed of me. So I'm going to slip into town this afternoon if I can manage it."

Mrs. Hopkins smiled affectionately.

"Get a green dress, love. Mr. Tim would like you in green."

"Mrs. Hopkins, what a lot of nonsense you do talk!"

At half past six that evening Sarah heard old Mrs. Foster calling her. She had just put on her new dress. She hadn't had much time, but she got exactly what, no doubt, Mrs. Hopkins had had in mind: a dull green velvet cut on classical lines.

But there was no time to worry over her own appearance, because Mrs. Foster was rapping at her door now and calling impatiently: "Miss Stacey, didn't you hear me calling?"

"I'm coming, Mrs. Foster," Sarah answered.

Out in the passage Mrs. Foster was waddling back to her own room. Her black lace dress gaped open all the way down the back.

"I must have put on weight," she complained. "I can't do up my dress. Help me with it, will you, Sarah? And you might pin up my back hair, too. It's getting so difficult for me to reach."

She sat on the stool in front of the mirror and Sarah struggled with the fastenings and got them secured.

"It's exciting having a party," the old lady was saying complacently. "Of course, a lot of people will think we shouldn't have one so soon after Eliot's death, but I'm entirely on Oliver's side in this. Eat, drink, and be merry! What a motto! You're looking very smart, Sarah. Is that a new dress?"

SARAH waited to adjust a hairpin, then answered casually, "Yes, this is new. I only bought it to-day."

"Ah, ha! Nothing of the governess about you, my dear. Not that you don't seem to make a very good one. By the way, have you noticed that young man Oliver's had to the house?"

"Brian Page?"

"Yes. Don't you think he's extraordinarily like Eliot?"

Small, dark, introverted — yes, there was a similarity to Eliot. But Brian Page hadn't Eliot's look of utter disillusionment.

"I only hope Oliver's not unkind to him," Mrs. Foster went on.

"Unkind?"

"Yes. He was to Eliot, you know. He was always so big and unafraid of anything and he knew that Eliot was nervous and sensitive. He used to play on it, the scamp, and when Eliot was so much ahead of him at school he bullied him."

"But didn't you stop him?" Sarah exclaimed.

Mrs. Foster gave a fatuous smile.

"Oh, I tried to, of course. But then I thought if Eliot's ever going to have guts this will develop them. A boy has to stand up for himself. Eliot never did learn to, though. Pah!" Mrs. Foster made a disgusted sound. "He was my son, but I've no time for weakness."

"I realise that," Sarah murmured. She had a sudden desire to take a hairpin and stick it hard into the heartless old creature's head.

"I can't help wondering," Mrs. Foster was saying, "whether Oliver sees a likeness to Eliot in this young man, too. Oliver misses his brother, you know. Ah, well, it's an unkind world. The battle's to the strong."

She tugged with her thick white fingers at the waistband of her dress. Her face was peevish. "This dress is much too tight. I shan't be able to do justice to my dinner."

The clock struck a quarter to seven as Sarah left her and went downstairs. Oliver met her in the hall. He looked startlingly handsome in evening dress, with a white camellia in his buttonhole, but he had an anxious air.

"Sarah, you look charming. Would you be so good, my dear, as to run up and see how Venetia is getting on? She has some idea of not letting me into her room until she's dressed. To surprise me, I suppose. But tell her not to be late down, will you?"

Did he really think she didn't know Venetia had locked her door against him for a week? He wanted to keep up appearances, of course.

When Sarah knocked at the door there was a complete silence, then Venetia's voice came sharply, "Who's there?"

"It's me, Sarah. Can I come in and help you?"

"I don't need any help," Venetia called back. But she came and unlocked the door and Sarah saw that she was nearly finished dressing. She had on a rose-colored tulle dress over a stiff taffeta petticoat. She would have looked angelic had her expression not been so wan and dispirited.

"What a lovely dress," Sarah said. "Oliver thought you must have wanted to surprise him."

"Oh, no, he's seen it before," she answered uninterestedly. Then she added quite spontaneously, "That isn't why I keep my door locked."

"Then why do you?" Sarah asked.

"I feel safer that way."

"Safer! Oh, come, now, you're imagining things."

"No, I'm not. You'll find out some time, perhaps before very long, that I'm right."

Venetia was getting a little queer, Sarah thought uneasily. What ought to be done? Perhaps she could have a word with Dr. Forsythe during the evening.

"Well, cheer up now," she said briskly. "You're very pale to-night. How about a little rouge to match that pretty dress?"

"You don't believe what I say, do you?"

"Well, not altogether. I think you're encouraging yourself to be morbid. Make up your mind to forget things and enjoy the party to-night."

Venetia nodded seriously.

"Yes. I don't mind this party, because there will be plenty of people about. That makes it safer."

She sat on the stool in front of her dressing-table, her skirt frothing about her like a full-blown rose, her fair hair curling softly on her shoulders. From the back she was a picture of a beautiful girl going to a party.

"I know you don't believe me," she said. "You think I'm just silly and scared and neurotic. But I know the truth. There's someone in this house wants to kill me."

. . . . . .

Oliver was at the piano, singing "I love sixpence, pretty little sixpence, I love sixpence better than my life . . ." as Sarah and Venetia went down to the drawing-room together.

He turned and saw them come into the room and, with his eyes on Venetia in her glowing dress, he skipped the rest and sang with absorbed tenderness, "I spent nothing, I lent nothing, I love nothing better than my wife . . ."

Then he got up and went to her, taking her hand.

"My sweet, you're delicious. You look like pink candy. Or a sunset. Or a rose in winter time."

He stooped to kiss her and Venetia made no protest. But neither did she return the kiss. She said in an agitated voice, "Why aren't all the lights on?"

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Voice of a Dove

Continued from page 40

LOOKING round the room, Oliver said, "Don't you think it's rather pleasant with not too many?"

"No. Put them all on. In the dining-room, too. We must have plenty of light. We can't have people groping about in the dark."

"I thought it looked artistic. But as you say," Oliver agreed good-humoredly. He snapped on the ceiling light and at the same time the front doorbell rang.

"Here they are," he said. He kissed Venetia swiftly on the forehead. "Buck up, darling. We're going to have fun."

Half an hour later they were all seated round the dinner table. Sarah had Brian Page on her right and Dr. Forsythe on her left. Rachel Massey was next to Tim, and Oliver, at the head of the table, had the leading lady of "Meadowsweet," Sonia Helm, on one side and Burgess Reid on the other.

Venetia, looking fragile and remote at the other end of the table, was apparently listening intently as Jack Lye told her a story with gesticulations.

It had all the makings of a very successful evening. The company was animated, there were enough diverse interests to provide good conversation, the duckling were done to perfection, and the vintage champagne following an excellent sherry was calculated to do all it was meant to.

But Sarah couldn't relax. She kept remembering Venetia's odd, desperate remark that someone was going to kill her.

She kept looking at Tim, who seemed to have a lot to say to Rachel Massey, and wondering poignantly how he would feel if he heard, down in his Cornish cottage, that Venetia had been murdered. But of course she wasn't going to be murdered.

"What a mind he has!" she realised Brian Page was saying.

"Who? Oh, you mean Oliver? Yes, indeed. He's becoming very successful."

"That scene in 'Meadowsweet'——" Sarah tried to pay attention, but she was hearing scraps of conversation all round the table.

Burgess Reid was saying to Oliver, "You old devil, you would keep the good news from me," and Oliver answering with his deep, jolly laugh, "I'm still not entirely out of the wood. But I'm making appreciable progress."

From across the table she heard Rachel Massey saying to Tim as if he were making an assignment, "The Rose and Crown at Hammersmith? It's a very small place along the tow-path on the right of Hammersmith Bridge."

"Good. I'll be there."

So Rachel shared Tim's recently developed enthusiasm for "pub-crawling." Or were they up to something more important?

"And then," Jack Lye said to Venetia, "thank goodness the curtain came down."

"Have you noticed, Miss Stacey," said Dr. Forsythe in a low voice, "whether Venetia is constantly in that nervous condition? Or is it only being a little keyed up about this party?"

Here was her opportunity to tell him about Venetia's odd fancies. Her words, "There's someone in this house who wants to kill me," were going to sound very bald and unconvincing when repeated, but the doctor ought to be told about them.

"I'd like to have a talk to you afterwards, Doctor," Sarah said. "Venetia has been behaving a little oddly."

"Certainly, my dear. At the first opportunity."

It was a pleasant meal and was carried to its conclusion of coffee and liqueurs in the lounge without any upset. Sarah at last began to relax. When Tim came over to her to say, "Sarah, love, you're ravishing. Marry me to-morrow," she smiled in complete friendliness.

"What a shock you'd get if——"

And there her words were cut off as, without warning, all the lights went out. Except for the firelight, the room was in darkness.

There were some gasps and excited chattering, and then Oliver's unperturbed voice came out of the darkness, "It must be a temporary power failure. Don't move, anybody. The lights will come on again in a minute."

"The firelight's rather pleasant," said Rachel Massey.

Petunia came fumbling her way to the door and then over to Venetia. She said in a rather scared voice, "Ma'am, we've got no lights in the kitchen. Mrs. Hopkins wants to know where you put the candles."

"Just wait a minute or two, Petunia," called Oliver. "The power's bound to come on."

But Venetia pushed back her chair and stood up. Sarah could hear the edge of terror in her voice.

"Oliver, we can't sit in the dark. It's ridiculous. The failure may last half an hour. I'll get the candles, Petunia."

"I'll go if you'll say where, ma'am."

BREATHLESSLY, Venetia said, "No. They're in a special place for an emergency. I didn't know we'd have one so soon." She hated the dark.

"Let me strike a match for you," said Jack Lye.

Everyone began getting up. Sarah saw Venetia go to the door, then her glimmering dress disappeared in the darkness of the hall. A match flared and went out. Jack Lye's voice said, "Sorry. I got jostled."

"Hasn't someone got an electric torch?" demanded Tim. Suddenly his voice was sharp with apprehension. "Venetia, don't go down to the cellar in the dark. Wait till I get my torch." He was thinking of what had happened to Mary, of course. That must be the only reason for his sharp warning.

But it was unheeded. Or too late. For scarcely had he said the words than there was a scream. Then a dreadful clatter. Then, after a petrified moment, another scream, this time from Petunia. Then pandemonium.

"Get a light," shouted Oliver. "Venetia's fallen. Hasn't someone got a light?"

Everyone was crowding into the hall, but no sound at all came from the cellar. Venetia obviously was unconscious—or dead.

Two or three people struck matches and Oliver scrambled down the steep stairs into the pitch blackness below. Then the white beam of Tim's torch shone down. He stood holding everyone back, and said, authoritatively, "Stand back, everyone. Let Dr. Forsythe come down."

Dr. Forsythe went briskly down and Tim followed him with the light. Sarah had a glimpse of Oliver's fair head bending over the crumpled form that was Venetia. Petunia began sobbing noisily.

Then Tim called, "Sarah, come and help me find these infernal candles," and she herself went down the treacherous stairs into the cold, dark cellar.

"Is she alive?" she heard Oliver ask hoarsely.

"Yes, she's alive," Dr. Forsythe answered. "She seems to be suffering from concussion. She's fallen on her head. I can't make a complete examination until we get her upstairs. Aren't there any lights yet?"

Sarah struck matches frantically while Tim searched on the shelves for the candles. He found them at last where Venetia had secreted them.

"Get upstairs and light them," Tim said. "We'll bring Venetia up."

They brought Venetia right up to her bedroom, Tim and Oliver carrying her. Sarah had thrust some of the candles into Mrs. Hopkins' trembling hand, but she had kept four for the bedroom, and their wavering, eerie light flung huge shadows about the pretty room as Venetia was laid on the bed.

"Bring the light here," Dr. Forsythe said curtly, and Sarah held the flickering candle, her hand trembling so that she had difficulty in not spilling grease on the silk bed coverings or the pale blue carpet.

Beyond the circle of light Oliver stood watching. She could sense rather than see the tenseness of his figure.

"No bones broken," Dr. Forsythe said, his voice all at once more cheerful. "I was afraid at first she'd broken her neck."

"What is it?" Oliver asked.

"Concussion and multiple bruises. Quiet is the essential thing. We'll have to arrange for a nurse. If you don't mind my saying so, Oliver, you ought to have something done about those stairs."

"Yes," came Tim's voice from the doorway. Sarah could see him standing there, tall and thin, his brown flesh making his face scarcely discernible. "When Venetia recovers consciousness she'll tell us how it happened."

Oliver turned to face him. "There's only one thing that could have happened, surely. She tripped in the dark."

"Yes. I suppose so. Even if you know the stairs well, they're so steep you could trip. Mary did, didn't she? And she must have known them."

Tim's voice was reflective. It wasn't even bitter the way it usually was when he talked of Mary's accident. "Yet Venetia may be able to throw some interesting light on the subject."

There were other people crowding to the door. Mrs. Hopkins, pushing in front of everyone, whispered sibilantly, "How is she, Mr. Oliver?"

Oliver said heavily, "She's still unconscious. But Lionel hopes for the best. I blame myself. I should have had something done about those rotten stairs. They're a death-trap."

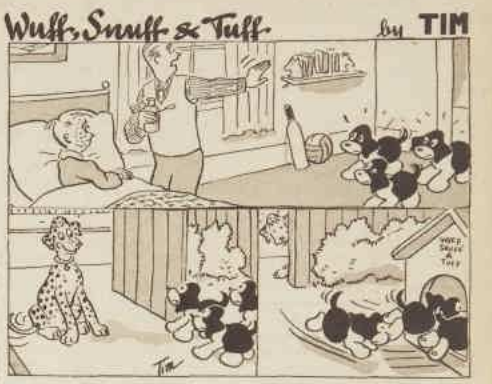
"Now, don't you take on, sir," Mrs. Hopkins said soothingly. "Who was going to know she'd run down there in the dark? By the way, sir, the street lights are still on, so the power failure's only in this house. It must be a fuse. What should I do?"

"I'll telephone for an electrician," Oliver said. He was pulling himself together with an effort. "Is there anything more I can do, Lionel?"

"Nothing at all, old boy," Dr. Forsythe said reassuringly. "Don't worry. She'll come out of this all right. Go and do something about the lights. That'll be the most helpful at the moment."

Please turn to page 42

FOR THE CHILDREN



"Now I know! Even 'problem' floors will come up shiny-bright with VELVET soap"

says MRS. HARP of WOOLAHRA, N.S.W. to *Aunt Jenny*

Scrubbing a kitchen floor can be the housewife's hardest task, but when Aunt Jenny visited Mrs. Harp at her modern home she found her making light work of this chore. Mrs. Harp uses mild extra-soapy Velvet for all the rubbing and scrubbing, and her hands tell her how gentle Velvet is.

"This beautiful cloth came from Singapore. It's one of my prized possessions. I wouldn't dream of washing it with anything but Velvet".

"Yes", adds Aunt Jenny, "you can trust the finest things to Velvet, and isn't it wonderful the way Velvet-washed linens last!"

"I used to find floor scrubbing and polishing a frightful chore until I used Velvet. This rubber floor seemed to get dirty quicker than any in the house," Mrs. Harp told Aunt Jenny.

"I can see how quickly you're doing the job!" exclaims Aunt Jenny.

"Yes! And without polishing, Velvet brings back the brand-new lustre to my rubber floor".

Pure mild Velvet is so kind to your hands — so gentle to your clothes. Here's why Velvet-washed clothes last longer.

FABRICS WASHED WITH ORDINARY SOAPS — seen under a magnifying glass — look frayed and worn out because hard rubbing is necessary with skimpy, inferior lather. And look how those weary-willy suds leave dirt ingrained in the weave

FABRICS WASHED WITH VELVET SOAP — seen under a magnifying glass — stay strong as new, wash after wash because no hard rubbing is needed — yet not a trace of dirt is left behind. Velvet's extra soapy suds are kind to the most delicate skin and gentle to your clothes, too!

V 199.WW66g

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Voice of a Dove

Continued from page 41

RELUCTANTLY Oliver agreed and went out.

Mrs. Hopkins shut the door and between them they got Venetia undressed and into bed, cutting the elegant dress in a way that made Mrs. Hopkins "Tch, tch!" remorsefully.

"The least possible movement," Dr. Forsythe cautioned. "Miss Stacey, you've had nursing experience, I take it?"

"Yes, I nursed my father."

"Then I can leave her in your care until I get a nurse? Just see that she keeps absolutely quiet. If she recovers consciousness, let me know at once. I'll come, no matter what time it is."

"Thank you, Doctor," Sarah said. At the moment she was too concerned for Venetia to worry about the long vigil ahead.

"Seems like parties in this house is fated," Mrs. Hopkins said grimly. "It's just as well Jennie's is at your aunt's, Miss Stacey. Well, she looks more comfortable in bed, poor lamb."

She shook her head sadly. "What a head she's going to have to-morrow. It's a miracle she wasn't killed outright. Just fancy her tripping on those stairs. I mean, she's lived in this house long enough. Not like Mrs. Eliot just finding her way around."

"It was an unlucky accident," Sarah said firmly. "I'll let you know if I want you again, Mrs. Hopkins."

"Very well, Miss," Mrs. Hopkins answered, withdrawing rather reluctantly. "Are you going to sit up all night?"

"If it's necessary."

"Then you must let me know if you want me to take a turn. I'll get cleared up in the kitchen now. I expect everyone will go home. I should think after this they'll be nervous of having parties in this house."

She finally got out of the room, and almost as soon as she had gone Tim came in, carefully closing the door behind him.

He crossed over to the bed and stood a moment looking at Venetia. His face was lean and sharp, the uncertain light making hollows in his cheeks so that he looked strange and a little frightening.

"Sarah," he said in a low voice across the bed, "there's something I want to say quickly before anyone else comes in. Can I trust you not to leave this room before I come back?"

"Where are you going?" she asked sharply.

"I have an important appointment. I'll be back before midnight."

"Tim, you can't keep an appointment to-night. Not after this."

"Sorry, but I have to."

"Where is it?"

"At Hammersmith."

Sarah remembered the fragment of conversation she had heard at dinner. Rachel Massey saying in her confidential voice, "The Rose and Crown? It's just along the tow-path . . ."

"If it weren't really urgent ——" Tim was going on, but Sarah interrupted him with a scathing, "Oh, yes, I understand its urgency. It would be an awful pity to miss it and she'd be so disappointed."

"Sarah, what are you talking about?"

"Well, aren't you going to the Rose and Crown?"

He looked surprised.

"Are you learning Mrs. Hopkins' art? As it happens, I am going there. We think Haley, the porter of Camelot Flats, may be there. But I should be back well before midnight. Why I want you to be here is in case Venetia recovers consciousness. That's where the danger lies."

"Danger?"

"Yes, it's possible she'll remember what happened."

"I suppose she will. She'll know she fell down the stairs."

"She may even know more than that."

"Tim, what are you suggesting? That——"

"There's someone in this house wants to kill me!" Uncomfortably Sarah remembered the deep conviction in Venetia's words.

Oh, nonsense! she told herself firmly. Venetia had simply fallen down a dangerous flight of stairs in the dark.

"Two similar accidents could be too much of a coincidence," Tim said. "The lights going out may have provided an opportunity too good to be missed."

"You stand there suggesting—" Sarah's voice wasn't entirely steady, "suggesting that this wasn't an accident, yet you calmly go out to trace an old mystery. Nothing more is going to happen to Lexie Adams if you don't trace the porter to-night."

PATIENTLY Tim said, "Whether you think it or not, it's extremely important. The whole thing's going to tie-up or I miss my guess. Now look, Sarah, do as I say. Don't leave this room under any circumstances whatever. Understand?"

"And what would happen if I did?" she asked coldly.

"Nothing may happen at all. But it may happen someone will find it very important not to let Venetia recover consciousness. And talk."

"But who?" Sarah demanded. "It isn't possible—— Oh, get out of here with your melodramatic notions. One moment you're talking like this and the next you're going off to live in Cornwall, as if nothing whatever was happening here. You're not consistent."

"Everything in its turn," Tim said. "Cornwall isn't for another week. Look, I've got to fly. I'll be back as soon as I possibly can, within an hour, I hope. Then I'll share this with you. But you're the only one to hold the fort in the meantime."

And suddenly Sarah realised that he wasn't being either melodramatic or facetious. Quite frankly, he meant her to stay there because if danger existed for Venetia it existed most intensely before she could recover consciousness and tell what she knew.

But how was she alone to hold off a murderer?

The room, with its dancing candlelight, was suddenly menacing.

"Tim, I can't stay here. I'm scared."

Then he had come round to her and his fingers were biting deeply into the bare flesh of her shoulder.

"It's something you have to do, scared or not. And I won't be long, I promise. No one will even know I've gone. They'll think there's two of us in here, and that will make it doubly safe. But if anything happens and you're really afraid, ring for the police."

Then he went to the door and opened it, hesitating a moment and looking into the darkness in both directions before going swiftly and softly away.

Sarah began to realise that she was cold. Tim had said she wasn't to leave Venetia, no matter who came into the room, but he might have thought to ask her if she wanted anything first. He might have realised she wouldn't keep very warm in a dinner dress on a chilly autumn night.

She opened Venetia's wardrobe and found a woollen jacket and slipped that on. Then she looked at her watch and saw that it was only eleven o'clock and there were eight more hours to daylight.

What had happened to everybody? Had all the guests gone home? Sarah tiptoed to the door, opened it, and looked down the dark passage.

Downstairs, so far off that it seemed like a dream, she could hear voices. So everyone hadn't gone yet. She longed to go down and hear what they were saying and surmising. Did any of them share Tim's fears?

Please turn to page 48

Fashion FROCKS

Ready to wear or cut out ready to make.

"ROWENA."—House frock. A trim style and is available in a good quality check gingham, and the color choice includes navy and white, red and white, blue and white, and green and white.

Ready to Wear: Sizes 32in., 34in., 36 in. bust, 35/11. Postage and registration, 3/6 extra. Sizes 38in., 40in., 42 in. bust, 39/3. Postage and registration, 3/6 extra.

Cut Out Only: Sizes 32in., 34in., 36in. bust, 41/9. Postage and registration, 3/6 extra. Sizes 38in., 40in., 42in. bust, 44/11. Postage and registration, 3/6 extra.

"BABETTE."—Layette. A dainty set, comprising frock, petticoat, nightgown, matinee jacket, and pilchers. The material is a good quality flannelette in white only. **Available Ready to Wear** Only. Size infants to 6 months, price 52/6 complete set, with 3/9 extra for postage and registration.

● *NOTE: Please make a second color choice. No C.O.D. orders accepted. If ordering by mail, send to address given on page 62.*

Frocks may be inspected or obtained immediately at Fashion Frocks, Stoddart's Building, 21 Pier Street, Sydney.

Ah-h! Every breath brings EXTRA FAST RELIEF for Stuffy, Coughing COLDS

5 Proved Medications All Work Together When You Inhale "VAPORUB IN STEAM"

WHEN YOUR CHILD is all stuffed up and miserable with a cold, just melt a big teaspoonful of Vicks VapoRub in a bowl or basin of boiling water and let him inhale the concentrated medicinal vapours. The swift comfort will surprise you!

WITH EVERY BREATH, VapoRub's balanced medicinal formula of menthol, camphor, eucalyptol and other time-tested ingredients works deep inside the sore, clogged air-passages. These special medicated vapours clear out the misery *extra* fast!

NOW HE CAN BREATHE! Irritation is soothed, tight, chokey phlegm is loosened, coughing is calmed, and that stuffy "can't breathe" feeling has altogether vanished. Repeat this "VapoRub in Steam" treatment after several hours if needed.

AND ALWAYS RUB IT ON FOR CONTINUED RELIEF—At bedtime, rub Vicks VapoRub generously on chest, throat and back. Then the body warmth releases the vapours, and your child breathes them in, for hours. At the same time, VapoRub works through the skin, like a warming poultice, and "draws out" congestion. Next morning, often, the worst of the cold is over.

VICKS VAPORUB

Inhale it in steam! Rub it on, too!

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CENTURY-OLD HOME

• Historic Lindsay Park, at Angaston, S.A., the home of Sir Keith and Lady Angas, grew to its present imposing dimensions (above) from a four-roomed cottage built in 1841, four years after Adelaide was founded. The Queen was to have lunched there privately during her visit to the Barossa Vintage Festival on the Royal tour.

DRAWING-ROOM. A view of the drawing-room at Lindsay Park with its polished floors covered with Persian rugs and the comfortable chairs upholstered in a charming floral cretonne. All the woodwork, including the panelling, is white. Stag heads above the mantelpiece dominate the room.

SIR KEITH ANGAS, who was recently knighted, with Lady Angas and their charming daughter, Sara. Sir Keith is a great-grandson of George Fife Angas, who lived for many years on the property.

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Readers' favorite recipes win cash prizes

An appetising pie to add interest to cold-weather menus wins the main prize of £5 in our weekly cookery contest. Once the family have tried rabbit creole pie they will vote it "tops."

CONSOLATION prizes this week are awarded to recipes for two-fruit crumble and caramel nut cake. Each dish is interesting, slightly unusual, and rich in flavor.

All spoon measurements refer to level spoons.

RABBIT CREOLE PIE

Six ounces rough puff or flaky pastry, 1 rabbit, salt and pepper, 1 blade mace (may be omitted), 2 cloves, ¼ to ½ cup minced bacon (rind removed), 2 tablespoons flour, 1 dessertspoon curry powder (or more according to taste), allspice or pinch mixed herbs, 1 white onion, 2 apples, 1 dessertspoon chopped parsley, ½ pint stock, 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce, 1 dessertspoon lemon juice.

Wash rabbit, cut into joints. Cut body into 3 or 4 sections. Soak in salted water ½ hour. Place in saucepan, cover with hot water. Bring to boiling point, add salt, mace, cloves, allspice or herbs, and rinds from bacon. Simmer gently 1½ hours or pressure-cook 20 minutes. Remove rabbit, cool. Roll in flour mixed with curry powder. Place rabbit in bottom of greased casserole, cover with layers of peeled sliced onion and apple. Top with minced bacon and chopped parsley. Pour over stock, sauce, and lemon juice. Roll pastry to ¼in. thickness. Cover pie with pastry. Trim edge, decorate top with rose and leaves. Glaze. Bake in hot oven 10 minutes, reduce heat to very moderate, cook further 45 to 50 minutes.

First Prize of £5 to Miss S. Mackay, 50 Edwards St., Brighton South, S.A.

TWO-FRUIT CRUMBLE

Three large cooking apples, 1 dessertspoon butter or substitute, rind and juice of ½ lemon, ½ cup sugar, 2 bananas, 2 tablespoons water.

Topping: Three tablespoons flour, 3 tablespoons coconut, 2 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, 2 dessertspoons butter or substitute.

Peel, core, and slice apples. Place in saucepan with sugar, butter (or substitute), lemon rind, juice, and water. Reserve a little lemon juice to coat bananas (to prevent discoloration). Cover apples, cook gently until soft and pulpy. Place in greased ovenproof dish. Cover with sliced bananas lightly coated with lemon juice. Place flour, coconut, sugar, and cinnamon in basin. Rub in butter or substitute, sprinkle over banana. Bake in moderate oven 25 to 30 minutes until top is crisp and lightly browned. Serve with cream or custard.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Miss M. Crowley, 40 Silver St., Marrickville, N.S.W.

CARAMEL NUT CAKE

Two ounces butter or substitute, ½ cup brown sugar, 1 egg, 1 cup self-raising flour, 3 tablespoons milk, vanilla.

Filling: Quarter cup brown sugar, ½ to ½ cup chopped walnuts, 2 dessertspoons melted shortening, 3 dessertspoons flour, 2 teaspoons cinnamon.

Cream butter or substitute with brown sugar. Add egg, mix well. Fold in sifted flour alternately with milk and essence. Place half in bottom of greased 7in. cake-tin. Cover with filling prepared by melting shortening and stirring in other ingredients. Spread evenly on cake mixture, cover with balance of cake mixture. Bake in moderate oven 35 to 40 minutes.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Mrs. J. Thorp, 90 Lord St., Dynnyrne, Hobart.

RABBIT, onion, apple, bacon, and curry are the appetising combination which flavor this creole pie. Shortcrust pastry may be used as topping. See prize recipe.

APPLE CRUMBLE develops a new flavor interest with the addition of banana. Served in individual dishes with a topping of cream. It looks as good as it tastes. See recipe.

Vital elements, often lacking, are supplied in full measure by Scott's Emulsion.

"I can't give my boy wealth and wisdom—I hope he'll win them for himself. But I can help to give him the greatest gift of all—perfect health founded in babyhood and built up through youth.

If my baby is going to grow up straight-limbed and sturdy he'll need Vitamins A & D and Hypophosphites regularly. So I'm giving him Scott's Emulsion—because there is no more pleasant and digestible form of cod liver oil, and the best natural source of these essential Vitamins, combined with bone building Hypophosphites."

Start your baby on Scott's Emulsion now. It will ensure sturdy limbs, good health, and a strong resistance to colds and illness.

SCOTT'S Emulsion

Nature's Own Food Tonic

ALL CHEMISTS AND STORES

Basic recipe No. 10

KITCHEN CUT-OUTS

THIS is the tenth of the basic recipes which are being published each week in response to numerous requests.

LIGHT BUTTER CAKE

Four ounces butter or substitute, 4oz. sugar, ½ teaspoon vanilla (or any desired flavoring), 2 eggs, 8oz. self-raising flour or 8oz. plain flour, and 4 teaspoons baking powder, good pinch salt, ½ cup milk.

Cream butter or substitute with sugar and vanilla or other flavoring until soft, white, and creamy. Add eggs one at a time or beat eggs lightly and add a little at a time, beating until smooth and well mixed. Sift dry ingredients two or three times, add to creamed mixture alternately with the milk, folding in with a down-up-and-over movement.

Cook in:

1. Greased patty-tins in hot oven 12 to 15 minutes; makes 2 dozen patty-cakes.
2. In 2 greased bar-tins in moderate oven for 25 to 30 minutes.
3. In greased 6 or 7in. cake-tin (not sandwich-tin), in moderate oven 50 to 60 minutes.

Variations:

Light Fruit Cake: Add 6oz. mixed fruit, ½ teaspoon each spice, nutmeg, and grated lemon rind.

Orange Cake: Add grated rind of 1 orange when creaming shortening and sugar; when cold, ice with orange-flavored icing.

Coffee Cake: Before cooking, sprinkle top with a mixture of 3 tablespoons flour sifted with 3 teaspoons mixed spice, then mixed with 3 tablespoons sugar and 2 tablespoons melted butter or other shortening.

Chocolate Cake: Blend 3 tablespoons cocoa with an extra ½ cup milk and add before the dry ingredients.

Seed Cake: Add ½oz. caraway seeds and 2 tablespoons finely shredded candied peel.

For the skin that doesn't like a **heavy** *foundation...*

This sheerer greaseless base

If your skin feels "uncomfortable" in a heavy make-up, choose this *merest* mist of a base! It's feather-light, *natural!* Before powder, smooth on a thin veil of satiny, transparent Pond's Vanishing Cream. Even as you stroke it on, this sheerer cream miraculously *disappears*, leaving only a smoothing, *adherent* film. Blends with any shade of powder. Never streaks or discolors. Just see how beautifully it takes powder—with a *completely* natural, soft-toned loveliness!

1-Minute Mask... instant glamour facial

Make your skin *glow* with enchanting springtime freshness! Before make-up, give yourself this magic 1-Minute Mask. Cover face, except eyes, with a lavish, cool cloak of Pond's Vanishing Cream. The Mask's "keratolytic" action loosens dirt and rough flakinesses that dull your skin. *Dissolves them off!* After 1 minute, tissue Mask off. You'll rejoice in your truly "re-styled" complexion—so much brighter, clearer, so beautifully smoothed for make-up!

Antonia Drexel Earle

"When I use lovely sheer Pond's Vanishing Cream as a foundation for powder, my make-up goes on easily and always stays on perfectly," says charming, young Mrs. Earle.

PV24

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HANDY FOR THE HOME

LIGHTWEIGHT bed-table gives the invalid or convalescent a firm surface for letter-writing or card playing. Beading round the edges prevents sliding if the table is tilted. Square slots in the table safely hold a tapered glass and a pencil.

FELT FIRE MITS: Cut the outline of your hand on four thicknesses of felt, allowing ½in. all round. Machine into pairs.

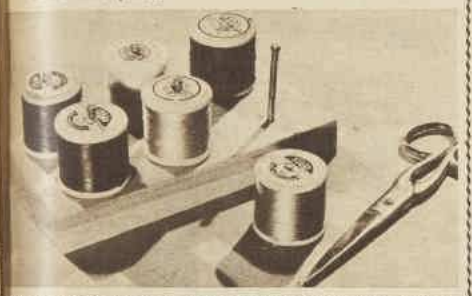
INSTRUCTIONS for the bed-table shown above:

Materials required: 1 piece ¾in. plywood 21in. x 12in., and 2 pieces 9in. x 6in.; 2 pairs 2in. hinges; and 45in. length round beading.

To make: Cover a block, preferably cork, with sandpaper and rub down the edges and surfaces of the wood.

Hinge the smaller pieces of wood at each end and to the underside of the large piece of plywood, using two hinges at each end. These hinged flaps form the sides of the table as shown above.

Nail the beading round three sides of the table-top and cut a hole for a glass, 2¼in. square, and a hole for a pencil, ⅜in. square, at the right side of table. Varnish or paint as required.



COTTON-REEL holder is made by hammering nails into a piece of ½in. wood. The size and shape of the wood can be varied to fit a drawer or work-basket.

Miss Precious Minutes says . . .

ASPIDISTRAS, palms, and similar indoor plants can be kept fresh and green if their leaves are sponged frequently with a little diluted milk and water. The milk gives a gloss and helps to prevent the brown, withered patches which often appear on leaves that are only water-sprinkled.

* * *

DON'T use soap or soda of any kind when washing china that is decorated with gilt. The china should be washed only in warm water, which will help to preserve the brightness of the gold and prevent it from fading.

* * *

A LITTLE vinegar added to the rinsing water when laundering men's flannel shirts will remove any trace of perspiration odor.

DRESS SENSE PATTERN

Mrs. Betty Keep, who conducts our weekly fashion feature Dress Sense, is on holiday, but she has chosen the special Dress Sense pattern for the four weeks she will be away. Her feature will be resumed when she returns.

WHEN ordering a paper pattern for the design illustrated, address your letter to Mrs. Betty Keep, "Dress Sense," The Australian Women's Weekly, Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.

Enclose the illustration of the design and 2/6, cost of pattern.

BE SURE TO GIVE FULL ADDRESS, INCLUDING THE STATE YOU LIVE IN, AND ALSO SUPPLY SIZE.

I will be glad to advise you in my column on any fashion problem.

BOLERO-FRONT DRESS. Requires 3½yds. 54in. material. Sizes 32in. to 40in. bust. Price, 3/6.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SEX

By SISTER MARY JACOB
Our Mothercraft Nurse

MANY inquiries are received regarding the answers that should be given to children's questions about sex.

If these questions are not answered frankly and sensibly, children often develop a sense of guilt and shame.

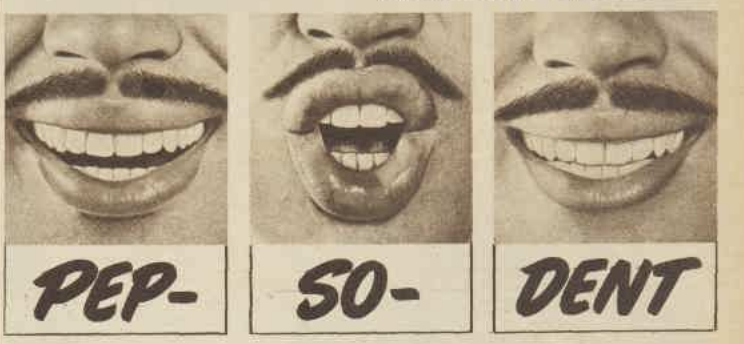
From the age of three to four children's observations and curiosity are keen. Eventually most of them ask the question: Where do babies come from?

It is far better for a child to get answers to his questions about sex from parents who love him.

No long and confusing explanations should be given. Usually if a child's curiosity is temporarily satisfied there are no more questions like these for a long time.

A leaflet giving guidance on this subject can be obtained from The Australian Women's Weekly Mothercraft Service Bureau, Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney. A stamped, addressed envelope should be sent with the request.

WHICH TOOTHPASTE GETS TEETH WHITEST?



Only Pepsodent contains Irium to get rid of FILM

Run the tip of your tongue over your teeth. Feel the film? Film builds continuously on everyone's teeth, clouding the natural whiteness, assisting decay. Only Pepsodent contains Irium, the special film removing ingredient. And Pepsodent does not contain harsh abrasives — its extra cleaning power is gentle cleaning power.

BUY THE BIG, NEW ECONOMY TUBE
— plenty for all the family

Mr. Len London, well known Radio personality, gave us his smile for these pictures.

Pt.103WW63g

The Neal family of 8 vote for RINSO

WITH ITS THICKER, RICHER SUDS

The Neals of 139 Hillcrest Avenue, East Bankstown, N.S.W., are typical of the thousands of families who have proved that ordinary suds just can't compete with the magic of Rinso's thicker, richer suds.

A FINE LEVER PRODUCT

NOW IN 2 SIZES Standard and big Economy Size

Z.327.WW83g

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"What will I look like, Doctor, when you take the bandages off?"

What can a doctor say, when he knows the answer is tragic disfigurement? That's what a road accident can mean.

It can mean a lovely young face scarred and disfigured for life. It can mean tendons severed and limbs made useless . . . athletes condemned to walk haltingly with two sticks.

All road accidents are not fatal, but, sometimes, those who die seem luckier than those who live.

Road accidents have taken a greater toll of Australian lives than has War. Thousands of lives have been lost or ruined by someone's craze for speed, or carelessness or inattention while driving.

Everyone can help to lower the death rate on our roads. If *you* drive, drive *safely*, *carefully*, always . . .

DEATH IS SO PERMANENT...

Authorised by the Australian Road Safety Council

MT4-143-22

PERRY MASON

by ERLE STANLEY GARDNER

• Famous lawyer Perry Mason, his secretary, Della, and private detective Paul Drake are after Chappie Colefax, whom they think murdered Pops O'Lean, foster-father of Chappie's fiancee, Cricket. Police suspect Cricket's brother, Tommy. Chappie wants to marry Cricket quickly, so he steals a car and they go to a J.P., but Perry stops the wedding. Chappie steals another car in an effort to escape.

TEENA

by Gilda Terry

National Library of Australia http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page4386860

COSY HAT AND SHOETTES

• Specially designed for mid-winter, the smart navy hat and pretty baby shoettes shown on this page are both made with two thicknesses of wool. See directions below.

Materials: 1 ball (1oz.) Lincoln Mills "Daphne" merino baby wool (used doubled throughout); 1 pr. No. 10 knitting needles; 1 No. 10 bone crochet hook; 1yd. of ribbon; some cardboard; small piece of soft material.

Measurement: Sole from heel to toe, 4in.

Tension: 8 sts. and 10 rows to 1in.

Using No. 10 knitting needles and doubled wool, cast on 38 sts. and work in p 1, k 1 ribbing for 20 rows.

21st Row: P 1, k 1, p 1, m 1 p 2 tog., (K 1, p 1, k 1, p 1, m 1, p 2 tog.) twice, (k 1, p 1) twice, (k 2 tog., m 1, k 1, p 1, k 1, p 1) twice, k 2 tog., m 1, k 1, p 1, k 1.

22nd Row: (P 1, k 1) to end of row.

23rd Row: (P 1, k 1) 6 times, p 1, leave on spare needle, work thus on next 12 sts. for instep:—

1st Row: K 1, (p 2, k 2) twice, p 2, k 1, leave rem. 13 sts. on spare needle.

Cont. on the 12 instep sts.

2nd Row: P 1, (k 2, p 2) twice, k 2, p 1.

3rd Row: As 2nd row.

4th Row: As 1st row.

Rep. rows 1 to 4 until there are 22 rows in instep, then keeping continuity of patt. dec. 1 st. at each end of next 3 rows. Break off wool.

Slip the 13 sts. at beg. of 23rd row from spare needle on to No. 10 needles, join on wool, then pick up and knit 18 sts. along side of instep sts., work across 6 sts. at centre front of instep in patt., pick up and knit 18 sts. along other side of instep, then work rem. 13 sts. from spare needle in ribbing.

Now commence foot.

1st Row: K 1, (p 2, k 2) to last 3 sts., p 2, k 1.

2nd Row: P 1, (k 2, p 2) to last 3 sts., k 2, p 1.

3rd Row: As 2nd row.

4th Row: As 1st row.

Rep. rows 1 to 4 once, then 1st and 2nd rows once. Cast off. Join back seam.

SOLE

Using doubled wool and crochet hook, work a chain of 15 sts., turn, miss 1st st., then work round the chain in double crochet, inc. in the two sts. at each end until sole measures 4in. long and 2in. across. Using 4 strands of wool, crochet cast-off edges of foot to sole.

INNER SOLE

Cut 4 thin pieces of cardboard 4in. by 2in. and in same shape as sole. Cover each piece with material, then join two pieces together by oversewing round edge. Slip into foot. Thread ribbon through holes around ankle.

CROCHETED SOLES give firmness to these shoettes for a 10-to-16-months-old, which are knitted in a broken rib.

HEAD-HUGGING HAT with the popular turned-down brim, crocheted in navy wool and trimmed with white, will be ideal for cold and windy weather. See directions on this page.

CROCHET HAT

Materials: 5 skeins "Twin-Prufe" Mothproof and Shrinkproof double crepe wool, shade No. 2361 (navy); 1 skein shade No. 1075 (white); 1 steel crochet hook No. 00; length of hat-wire.

Measurements: To fit 21in. head measurement.

Abbreviations: Ch., chain; d.c., double crochet; sl., slip.

Tension: 5 d.c., 1in.

CROWN

Using navy wool double, crochet 100 ch. Join with a sl-st. Work 8 rounds d.c.

9th Round: * 9 d.c., miss 1 d.c., rep. from * to end.

Work 2 rounds d.c.

12th Round: Rep. 9th round.

Work 3 rounds d.c.

16th Round: Rep. 9th round.

Work 3 rounds d.c.

20th Round: * 6 d.c., miss 1 d.c., rep. from * to end.

Rep. this last round until dec. to 7 sts. Draw wool through all sts. and fasten off.

BRIM

Join wool to lower edge of crown and work 2 rounds d.c.

3rd Round: * 9 d.c., work twice into next st., rep. from * to end.

4th Round: Work d.c.

Rep. 3rd and 4th rounds 4 times.

Work 3 rounds d.c., working fairly tightly. Work ch. into the back of each st. of last round.

Fasten off.

TO MAKE UP

Sew wire around edge of brim if required. Using 6 strands of white wool, plait length required and stitch 2 rows around hat and loop the remainder as shown.

OUR GARDENING SERVICE

READERS may obtain leaflets on subjects of current interest to home gardeners by sending this coupon with a stamped, addressed envelope to Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.

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Fresh Tricks with Mustard!

SUCH SUCCULENT STEAKS

You can accomplish a lot with a little Mustard: all sorts of unexpected graces! When frying or grilling steaks, try dipping the meat in a sauce made from ½ cup salad oil, ¾ teaspoon Mustard, 1 teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon pepper. Or simply rub the steak well with 1 teaspoon of Mustard. It's so appetising!

IT'S CHEESY

To enhance both appetite and flavour, add a trace of Mustard to any hot cheese dish.

KEEN'S MUSTARD .. of course

K4.122

A Certain Type of Man

Continued from page 9

PAULINE smiled. "Sometimes," she said, "a woman goes about it all wrong, by nagging, as you call it, and trying to keep a man on his toes so he's always at his best.

"I should think, though, if a man didn't have that—if a man didn't have someone who loved him enough to be interested in wanting him and their home to be always at their best—oh, I'm putting it very badly, but I should think if a man didn't have someone who cared for him like that it would be very demoralising."

He sat down then, on her neat couch, and she was still standing before him, looking at him with a bright look in her eyes he had seen before that might be anger and might be possible tears.

He said softly: "Pauline, sit down beside me, let me hold your nice, wise, little hand."

He thought about Julia's father and said to himself: Why, that poor little man! He's actually my type, but he's completely demoralised. Because nobody cares enough about him even to bother to nag him.

Pauline sat beside him and he took her hand. "There must be a better word for it than 'nag'," he said presently. "I wish I could think of it."

"People think they want to be left alone, but they don't," Pauline remarked thoughtfully. "It must be awful to live with someone who doesn't care what you do or how you look. You need someone to care for you, really care."

She was sitting a little stiffly, as if not daring to relax, and he felt a sudden rush of warmth and tenderness for her. He looked at her hand that he had taken in his own, and he thought: I know I'm being idiotic, but she'd work that hand to the bone for a man she loved and he wouldn't ever have any doubts about her love for him.

"Really! That's interesting! Did you hear that, George? It's very strange, because I was just talking to Mrs. Hecker and she said . . ."

Suddenly he saw what it was that had always troubled him about Julia, and about her mother to-day, too. They just didn't have it in them to care enough about anyone to bother. They never would.

All those things he'd thought so wonderful and understanding of Julia were just the evidence of a bland and sweet indifference. Lovely Julia, who would live to demoralise some man as her mother had done.

But not me, he thought. Not me. Good-bye, lovely Julia.

He said softly: "Relax, my dear, relax. And tell me again that my tie needs straightening, and tell me again that anyone can grow plants if they put their mind to it, and keep nagging me or whatever that word is that I will think of some day. I've just begun to realise how nice it is to have someone care so much."

She sank back against the cushions and looked at him out of the corners of her eyes, and then she smiled contentedly.

"Well, it's about time," she said.

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THE Prestige Regd.

KITCHEN COLUMN by Pat Woodley

(Miss N.S.W., 1951, and Qualified Home Economist)

"No need to tell you about the virtues of pressure-cooking," says Pat. "But it is important that you hear about the new developments Prestige have made with their 'COMMODORE' pressure cooker."

"You see, the usual cooker's pressure never *varies*. But the 'COMMODORE' *varies* its pressure to suit every type of food—from green vegetables to a sponge!"

"The right pressure means that the goodness is not boiled out—food retains a superlative freshness and flavour."

"The 'COMMODORE' cooks by gas or electricity," Pat pointed out. "And note its *extra capacity*—12½ Imperial pints! It's the ideal cooker for large families."

"Like all Prestige products the 'COMMODORE' Cooker was designed in the U.S., manufactured in Britain, yet still sells at an exceedingly LOW price!"

Pat's recipe for the month

"Here's my pressure-cooked recipe for the month," said Pat. "A tasty new dish I called *'Curried Meat Roll.'* I sampled it in London. It's ideal for these days with all fresh meats such a high price."

Curried Meat Roll

Cooking time, 2 minutes at 15 lb. Prestige pressure

Put 1½ ozs. dripping into cooker, fry a sliced onion lightly. Add 2 tablespoons curry-powder, stir into hot fat, cook for 2 minutes. Gradually mix in 1 pint (2 measures) stock or water, stirring well with wooden spoon. Add 1 oz. sultanas, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1 dessertspoon chutney and seasoning to taste. Bring to the boil, stir till curry thickens. Add 12 oz. tin of meat, cut into ½ inch cubes. Cover, bring to pressure, pressure-cook for 2 minutes. Reduce pressure with cold water.

Pat Woodley

YOUR Prestige Regd. KITCHEN COLUMNIST

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WHICH TWIN HAS THE TONI—

and which has the expensive perm?

(See answer below)

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Toni for a soft, *natural* look

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And ONLY TONI has the exclusive SPIN Curlers which grip—spin—and lock with a flick of the finger and give a perfect curl. No frizzy stage, no brittle ends, no stubborn kinks. From the first day, your Toni looks and acts like naturally curly hair.

Which twin has the Toni? ... Lovely Nola and June Fookes come from Westmead, N.S.W. Compare Nola's Toni (on the right) with June's expensive perm. You'll agree no other perm can surpass the natural beauty of Toni. And, for her next perm, all Nola will need is a Toni Refill.

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BABY'S TEETHING *need give you no anxieties*

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A wonderful tonic for the expectant father.

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Voice of a Dove

Continued from page 42

TIM was behaving oddly enough certainly, with his cottage in Cornwall, his urgent appointments at Hammersmith inns, and his fantasy about accidents that were not accidents.

But Tim hadn't said those words, "There's someone in this house who wants to kill me!"

Sarah listened to Venetia's heavy breathing and clenched her hands, repressing a desire to scream or cry, she didn't know which.

Then all at once, like a conjuring trick, the lights came on. She gave a small gasp of relief. She hurried to turn off the main switch and leave only the bedside light burning, in case too much glare disturbed Venetia, even in her dark unconsciousness.

At the same time footsteps came up the stairs. The door opened and Dr. Forsythe came in. He crossed to the bedside and examined Venetia again, feeling her pulse and lifting her eyelids.

"Is there any change?" Sarah asked.

He shook his head. "This is going to last for some hours, I'm afraid. Don't let people come in and out of here. And be sure to call me if you're alarmed about anything."

"Thank goodness at least the lights are fixed," Sarah said.

"Yes. It was a blown fuse. Everyone's going home. You'll have the house to yourselves in a few minutes. Good-night, Miss Stacey. I'll be round first thing in the morning."

When he had gone, Sarah expected Oliver to come up. She heard the banging of the front door and a few far-off good-nights. Then old Mrs. Foster came lumbering up the stairs.

It was too much to hope that she wouldn't stop at the door. She tapped with her stick, and when Sarah opened the door she stood wheezing and gasping on the threshold.

"I knew this dress was too tight," she said peevishly. "I couldn't do justice to my dinner—what Venetia didn't spoil by her stupidity. Falling downstairs indeed! Why, I've gone up and down those stairs a hundred times and never fallen. For Mary there was some excuse. But for Venetia none whatever, unless she had been drinking. How is she?"

Sarah had a desire to shut the door in the face of the callous old woman. Could it be by any chance she, who despised Venetia so entirely, who certainly would not grieve at her death . . .

"She's still unconscious," Sarah answered.

"H'm. Well, Lionel ought to send a nurse. You can't sit up all night."

"It won't hurt me in the least, Mrs. Foster. A nurse will be coming to-morrow."

Mrs. Foster gave a cracking yawn. "Well, I'm going to get some sleep, anyway. Good-night."

"Good-night, Mrs. Foster."

She trundled away with the grace, Sarah thought, of a sea-elephant. Sarah left the door open because it was reassuring to see the lighted passage. No one could come along there unexpectedly. Yet a little later Oliver came so quietly that Sarah didn't hear him until he was in the room.

He went and stood at the bedside, gazing at Venetia silently. His hair was tousled and had a dampish look. His eyes looked curiously dark and smudged in his pale face.

"I'm glad you got the lights fixed," Sarah said.

"Yes. It was a fuse," Oliver answered absently. He continued to gaze at Venetia. His absent words hadn't touched his thoughts. What were his thoughts? Sarah watched silently while he stooped and kissed Venetia gently on the forehead.

"Poor darling," he murmured. Then, without another word, he went out.

Sarah knew his words and action had been complete forgiveness to Venetia for her behaviour. They must have been. Yet why had she been unable to ask him if he thought Venetia's fall an accident?

It had been on the tip of her tongue, then suddenly she had been unable to say it.

No, that was impossible. It must have been an accident. Venetia's *previous* fear amounted to nothing more than the development of a persecution mania. Nothing more, she told herself firmly.

Yet supposing it were highly important to complete a half-done task and silence Venetia before she could talk . . .

Sarah looked at the clock. It was a quarter to twelve. Soon Tim would be home. He had said he would be back by midnight.

She switched on the electric heater because she was still cold, then sat in an easy chair. Venetia's breathing sounded above the tick of the clock. Outside the room the house was utterly silent.

Had Oliver gone to bed? He hadn't said what he was going to do. He had just wandered in and out like someone lost.

It couldn't have been Oliver who had pushed her, because, if it had been, he would have sent Sarah out of the room and stayed with Venetia himself. To finish a bungled job?

SARAH found herself shaking with horror. It was nothing to do with Oliver or anyone, it was entirely an accident.

But to send her away would not have been subtle. Rather, whoever was guilty would attempt to get her out of the room on some pretext so that she would not see who entered and left.

Someone knocked softly at the door. Sarah almost leaped out of her chair in a panic.

"Who is it?" she demanded, and her voice, because she had been so concerned that it shouldn't tremble, was sharp. A tray appeared, followed by Mrs. Hopkins' round face.

"Thought you'd like a cup of tea," she whispered.

"Oh, come in," Sarah whispered back in relief. "I didn't know who it was. One gets a little edgy alone in a sick-room."

"I should say so," Mrs. Hopkins said sympathetically. "Especially the way it is."

"What way?"

"Well, you must admit too many things are happening in this house for our comfort." Mrs. Hopkins set the tray down on Venetia's dressing-table stool and took the cosy off the teapot. "I think it's time Mr. Oliver sent for the police."

"Why? Because of an accident?"

"Two accidents and a suicide. There's something behind all this, Miss Stacey. I can't stand much more of it, and I fancy Petunia will give in her notice to-morrow." She nodded towards the bed. "Does she show any signs of coming round?"

"None at all."

"Poor thing. Might have broken her neck. I don't want to cast aspersions, Miss Stacey, but it was mighty queer the lights going out and this happening."

"Now, come, Mrs. Hopkins, who could arrange to have the lights go out?"

"Well, I don't say that that was arranged so much as it provided a heaven-sent opportunity."

"You're as bad as Tim."

"Does he think the same? I'm not surprised. However, don't let us get it on our minds now. Are you sure you wouldn't like me to take a turn sitting up?"

"No; Tim will be back any time. He's asked me to stay here until he came."

"Ah, yes, now he's reliable. I'd trust him. Then there's nothing more I can do?"

"No, thank you. I'd get away to bed if I were you."

"Very well, Miss Stacey. If you say so. Everyone else has gone. The house is quiet as a grave." She tiptoed to the door, then turned to whisper, "You'll have to yell loud if you want help. Petunia and I are right down in the basement."

"I won't need help, Mrs. Hopkins," Sarah said firmly.

But when Mrs. Hopkins' comfortable little figure had vanished, Sarah had an unreasonable desire to call her back. She was going down into the basement, far away. The house was so silent. Supposing . . .

"Now, stop that, Sarah my girl," she admonished herself severely. "Nothing's going to happen. Tim will be home presently and all will be well."

She drank a cup of hot tea, blessing Mrs. Hopkins for her thoughtfulness.

The clock on the mantelpiece struck twelve in a tinkling, bell-like voice that took her back to her childhood and the beautiful safety of her nursery, where both her mother and nurse were within call. Comforted, she settled back in her chair to rest and await Tim's return.

Another half hour went by. Sarah felt drowsiness creeping over her. She stretched and walked softly about the room.

It was odd that Tim was so long. He must have missed the last bus by this time. She lifted a corner of the blind to look out of the window and saw that it had begun to rain.

The street light opposite was obscured in a halo of mist, and the street was quite deserted. It looked dark and a little sinister save for that one haloed light. There would be no help there if she had to call.

Suddenly, as she dropped the blind, the telephone downstairs began to ring.

Sarah's first impulse was to rush eagerly to answer it. It would be Tim, saying he was on his way. But, no, he wouldn't do that, because he would realise she would be the only one up and he had insisted on her not leaving Venetia's room.

Then if it were not Tim, who was it? Why didn't someone answer it? They couldn't be all sleeping so soundly.

Then, as the bell went on shrilling, another thought came to Sarah and she felt prickles of gooseflesh up her arms and down her back. Was someone waiting for her to answer the telephone so that, for five minutes, Venetia would be alone? Had this call, perhaps, been arranged?

The sharp ringing was suddenly sinister. Sarah pressed her hand tightly over her mouth, afraid she would scream. Surely the sound must rouse even Venetia.

Then, with an impatient ping, it stopped, and the silence was even more terrifying. For now whoever had laid the trap and failed would be angry. And would find some more devious method to deal with her.

Sarah gave an impatient exclamation. Was she losing her reason, having these fantastic ideas?

To be continued

KEEP FRESHER! First, Bathe. Then shake Cashmere Bouquet Talcum over the body. How fresh it leaves you. And cool! Divinely cool.

FEEL SMOOTHER! Pamper the sensitive spots with extra Cashmere Bouquet Talcum. Its silken sheen protection insures you against chafing.

STAY DAINTIER! It's an inexpensive luxury to use Cashmere Bouquet Talcum lavishly and often. Gives your person the fragrance men love.

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WAKE UP YOUR LIVER BILE—

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The liver should pour out about 2 pints of bile juice into your digestive tract every day. If this bile is not flowing freely, your food may not digest. It may just decay in the digestive tract. Then gas bloats up your stomach. You get constipated. You feel sour, sunk and the world looks punk.

It takes those mild, gentle Carter's Little Liver Pills to get these 2 pints of bile flowing freely to make you feel up and up. Get a package to-day.

Effective in making bile flow freely. Ask for Carter's Little Liver Pills at any chemist or store right away.

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Mandrake the Magician

MANDRAKE: Master magician,
LOTHAR: His giant Nubian servant, and
PRINCESS NARDA: Have come to a strange kingdom ruled by a little old man with a supersonic box which can kill or cause pain. He befriends them and says he uses the box to keep intruders away because he hates guns. He loves animals and music, and when he inherited a fortune he built a piano 50 feet high and lived in it. He promises to show Mandrake how the piano is played. NOW READ ON:

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– your perfect companion for leisure ashore or afloat. You will find the 'Rover' – with long sleeves or short sleeves – the most useful garment you have ever worn, for the beach, golf, motoring, yachting – in fact, for pleasant occasions anywhere. The knitted contrasting waist-band may be worn inside or outside the trousers.

LOOK FOR THE LABEL Country Club TAILORED BY BUCKWALTER
STYLED BY SPIRE OF CALIFORNIA

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Wolf at the Door

Continued from page 4

MAMA Costello locked up the shop, tidied the counter, and carried in the remaining cakes and pastries. She put them away mechanically. She had a lot to do. She should start mixing a batch of cakes now for to-morrow. She should prepare the ingredients for the two special birthday cakes wanted at the end of the week. She should roll out some puff pastry. She did none of these things. She sat in the little living-room watching the clock and listening for Peronella's footsteps.

After what seemed hours of waiting, she heard a car stop in the street. Then footsteps sounded down the narrow lane. Mama Costello did not wait for Peronella to let herself in. She hurried to the door and flung it wide open. And instantly Peronella was close to her, hugging her, laughing and talking all at once.

Two figures appeared behind her in the doorway—a man and a woman.

"May we come in?"

"Yes, yes, please come in," invited Peronella. "Mama, look, this is Mr. and Mrs. Avery. They are the kindest people in the world. They have helped me so much. And I worked so hard, and I won the prize!"

Mama Costello looked from one to the other. "What you talk, bambina?"

"Let me explain," smiled the woman. She was quite young—and pretty, too—Mama Costello noted. Only, she thought proudly, nobody could be quite as pretty as Peronella.

"My husband and I were at the concert given at Peronella's school."

Yes, Mama Costello remembered that concert. Parents of pupils were invtied, and Peronella had brought her a beautifully engraved admission card, and begged her to attend. But Mama Costello had developed lumbago trouble. She could not go. Had she not thought of lumbago, she would have invented something else and still stayed away. Not for anything would she embarrass Peronella with her presence at the concert. Among all the fine parents who would be there, plain, homely Mama Costello would be quite out of place, she thought.

So she did not know that among the guests were the Averys, friends of the parents of another girl. The Averys were so impressed by Peronella's singing that they spoke to her after the concert, urging her to come and visit them, as Mrs. Avery wished to coach her in singing.

Mr. Avery was a compere on a broadcasting station, and through him Peronella learned of the big prize offered by a city businessman for the best amateur teen-age singer.

It was a prize worth trying for, indeed, as it represented two years' study abroad for the lucky winner, added to which was a substantial sum set aside for living expenses.

Peronella, overcome by joy at the opportunity to study singing, if only for a brief period of time, would not believe she stood a chance to compete for the prize. She begged the Averys not to tell her mother, as, knowing her, she realised her mother would be bitterly disappointed for her sake should she not win. And Peronella, who would have been grateful for even one of the minor prizes, did not dare hope for any at all. Best to tell Mama after it was all over. Then she wouldn't have anything to feel disappointed about.

Now the three of them were telling her all this. How Peronella visited the Averys almost every evening, how hard she had worked at her singing lessons while there; how an audition was arranged for her at the broadcasting studio—and, finally, how she sang.

"Now you must tell your mother the rest of the big news," Mrs. Avery said. "And both of you must be ready quickly so that we won't be late at the studio for the prize-giving."

Peronella held her mother tightly. She said, "Mama, I won the prize. I really won the prize. You know what it means? A sum of money—oh, a big sum of money—to be put in the bank for me. It is to pay for my lessons abroad. I am to study concert singing. Mama, darling, I was so afraid I would not win any prize."

"She is to sing to-night," said Mr. Avery. "And to-night she is to receive her prize officially. Last night, when she sang in the finals, it was already a foregone conclusion. But the news was only given out to-day."

"And you are especially invited," chimed in Mrs. Avery, "to be present at the studio when Peronella receives her prize. And she is going to sing especially for you to-night."

"Come," said Mr. Avery, "just put your coat on, Madame Costello, and come with us. We'll drive you and Peronella to the studio."

"I am so happy I could cry." Peronella's pretty face shone with gladness. "I am going to study very hard so that you could all be proud of me. And later I am going to be able to earn a lot of money so that I could take care of you, Mama, and you'll never need to work at all, dear. We must go now. Hurry, Mama, hurry."

Mama Costello found it hard to speak. She looked at the smiling faces before her. "My Peronella sing for lot of peoples? That true?"

"Yes, yes. But hurry now and come with us," Mr. Avery said.

"No," Mama Costello shook her head. "Studio no place for old woman, same like Mama Costello. Me, I sit here—in home." She paused for a moment. "I believe all this, yes. But I think, same time, I only dream."

Both the Averys and Peronella tried hard to induce her to come. But she was firm in her refusal.

"I stay home. Here is Pedro. Together we hear Peronella sing."

They were gone, and Mama Costello was alone again. She turned the radio on in readiness to hear the special broadcast.

She sat on the chair by the table, facing Pedro's photograph.

Mama Costello sighed with content. There never was any lupo in the street, after all. And, looking towards the door, she could almost see her old imaginary enemy, the wolf at the door, shrink in stature and disappear vanquished.

She looked at the clock. It was time for the special broadcast.

She heard the announcer say: "We are now to hear the beautiful soprano voice of Peronella Costello, the winner of this year's principal prize. Peronella, despite her youth and despite the fact that she received only a few lessons prior to entering the contest, has a voice of great purity, strength, and beauty.

"We acclaim her now. We look for a still greater performace from her upon her return from her studies abroad.

"Peronella will now sing for her mother. The song is Santa Lucia."

The golden notes seemed to fill the little room. Mama Costello sat, unmoving, listening with all her being.

As she listened, Mama Costello could see in her mind the blue Mediterranean, the fishermen's boats on the water. She could see herself—young, carefree, in a colorful dress and barefooted—with Pedro beside her. The moon shining on the water made for them a silvery pathway. The low wall on which they sat holding hands, lost in the wonder of the lovely night, built close against the sea, and the wavelets lapping against the stonework. The gentle sea murmuring softly, softly.

The song was ended, but Mama Costello still sat, hands folded on her lap. And though her eyes were moist her face was serenely happy.

(Copyright)

Problems of child health

ONE Australian child in every three has an unsatisfactory posture.

Doctors don't know whether bad posture causes ill-health or the other way round, but they do know that bad posture is often the only outward sign that all is not well with your child.

In some towns four-fifths of children have postural defects.

A survey of 36,000 children leads experts to wonder whether social and economic conditions may be responsible.

They want these factors considered now that research into child health problems is intensifying.

An article covering many of the question marks in polio, rheumatic fever, diphtheria, and asthma, as well as posture, appears in A.M. for July, now on sale.

Beauty in brief:

Cleansing touches

By CAROLYN EARLE

● *It is a good idea to have at least two sets of hair brushes and combs so that you will always have one clean pair on hand. Here's a brief brush-up on how to take care of these utensils.*

KEEP your brushes and combs away from dust.

Wash both these items as often as you wash your hair. Swish brushes up and down in suds water—never let them soak in water. Rinse in warm and then in cold water to make bristles firm.

Allow brushes to dry in an open space, but not over a radiator or too near to any sort of artificial heat.

One good way to dry your brushes is to stand them, handles down, in a jar near an open window.

From the point of view of cleaning, combs with wide spaces between the teeth are easier to handle. To keep in-between spaces clean, pull pieces of string through them.

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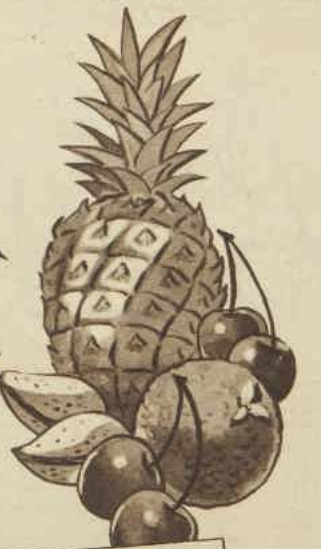
NUT MILK CHOCOLATE

Toasted Almonds and a Luscious Fruit Salad set in rich, creamy milk chocolate—



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. . . Big, ripe cherries and crisp, roasted almonds — set in velvety-smooth milk chocolate.

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THE CORPSE WAS IN THE COUNTING HOUSE

A COMPLETE BEST-SELLING NOVEL

By ERLE STANLEY GARDNER

SITTING in the quiet office were three men—three men with the same problem, and each of them missed Ellen Jasper—each for a different reason. Neil and Colby Anson had faced business crises before in the year and a half since they'd started their company. They'd had other conferences like this one with the auditor, lasting until far into the night, and they had always found some way for the company to stay in business and keep growing. But Ellen Jasper had been at all of the other conferences, and her quiet faith in the Anson brothers had somehow increased their faith in themselves.

To-night they could find no solution to their problem, but they wouldn't admit they were licked. They'd been over it all a dozen times.

"What I can't understand," Neil Anson said, "is what made Frank Crenshaw change his mind about us."

"Yeah," Colby, Neil's older brother, said. "When we started doing business with him he kept shoving money at us. You'd have thought we were the best risk in the world."

Neil nodded.

"What gets me," the auditor said, "is what information he could possibly have received that would make him feel that the risk had increased."

"He hasn't any information," Colby said. "That's just an expression he used in the letter to justify his action."

"But can't we demand that he tell us what the information is?" Neil asked. "Can't we insist on a chance to answer?"

Colby shook his head. "We were fools to sign that sort of contract, but that was the way Crenshaw wanted it. We agreed that any time he felt that the risk had increased he could call the loans within thirty days."

"Let's read that letter again," Neil said.

"It's no use," Colby told him wearily.

"What's the matter with you?" Neil asked. "You seem to have lost all your fight. You—"

He stopped abruptly as he realised that he was touching on a delicate subject. Colby's apathy dated back to the breaking of his engagement to Ellen Jasper. Ellen had been confidential secretary to Colby Anson ever since the firm had been started.

For a while she and Colby had been engaged, but after several months Neil had had the feeling that something was wrong. The date for the wedding was postponed three times, and then abruptly Ellen had broken the engagement and resigned her job.

Frank Crenshaw, who at that time was a friendly, genial, financial backer—apparently the best friend the two young men had ever had—suggested that Ellen had probably resigned in a fit of pique over something. He offered to give her a job with him at Pleasantville, and predicted to Neil that she'd be back in a month.

The month had now become two months, and the brothers had received a number of neatly typed letters from the Farmers and Manufacturers' Commercial and Savings Bank initialled FC:ej.

Ellen had not only been a highly competent secretary, but Neil found that he was missing her personally.

He kept hoping she'd settle whatever differences she'd had with Colby and return to work for the firm. But so far there had been no indication that she had given the matter a single thought. Nor had Crenshaw ever brought up the subject.

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Only a girl could prove his alibi—and he didn't even know her name

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THE CORPSE WAS IN THE COUNTING HOUSE

In the moment of strained silence that followed Neil's remark it was obvious that all three men were thinking of the reason for Colby Anson's depression.

"You don't suppose Ellen let any information slip that would have given Frank Crenshaw——?" the auditor blurted out.

"No," Neil said shortly.

"What information could she have given him?" Colby asked.

To cover his embarrassment, the auditor picked up the letter and read it aloud.

"I don't get it," he said. "Ellen wrote the letter—her initials are down here in the corner——"

"Let's leave Ellen out of it," Colby said coldly.

"I'm sorry."

"It's all right," Neil said. "We're discussing a business matter and we have to consider all the angles, but it's absurd to think that Ellen could have said anything that would have influenced Frank Crenshaw."

"Well," the auditor said, "there has to be some reason. Even up until ten days ago Crenshaw was perfectly cordial. When I took down the monthly statements he thought we needed another five thousand for operating capital. But I told him that the way things were going I thought we could make it very comfortably now."

Colby said gloomily, "I'm afraid that's the reason."

"What is?"

"That we're beginning to get to a point where we can be self-sufficient, where we could get other financing if we had to. In another couple of months the company should be making real money."

"What does all that have to do with it?" Neil asked.

"Don't you see? He wants to wreck us and buy up our stock cheap. I was warned that he'd try something like that, but I didn't believe it at first."

"But even so," the auditor protested, "we were meeting his interest payments regularly. The collateral is here and——"

"That's just the trouble," Colby said. "We put in our time and energy building up the business and now Frank Crenshaw wants it."

"Well," Neil said, "I'm not going to let him take it. I'm going to see Crenshaw myself. I'm going to show him our orders, our accounts receivable, our constantly increasing business."

"You can have all that stuff right now," the auditor said. "I've prepared a financial statement giving a complete picture of the business."

"That's swell," Neil said with a grin. "You give me the ammunition and I'll go out to use it."

"It won't do you any good," Colby said. "You might just as well throw it out the window. I tell you Crenshaw did the same thing with that manufacturing company down in Sweetland. He let them build it up and then all of a sudden he put the bite on them."

"That was different," Neil said. "One of the executives had started——"

"No, it wasn't different," Colby interrupted. "He used a different excuse, that's all. The business was growing. Crenshaw stepped in and wrecked it, then bought it in at foreclosure and sold it at a handsome profit."

"He'd have made a bigger profit if he'd kept on financing the business and let the fellows who knew develop it."

The auditor said dryly, "I happen to know something about that deal. He boasted about it afterwards. Said that because he bought for a song, then built it up and sold it, he only had to pay twenty-five per cent. income tax on the ground that it was a capital investment. If he'd gone ahead with the original deal everything he made would have been taxed as income."

"Well, I'm going to see him," Neil Anson said.

The auditor opened a drawer in his desk and took out a thick sheaf of papers. "Here's your ammunition."

"It's not the right sort of ammunition to use on a guy like that," Colby said.

"Don't you want to come with me?" Neil asked.

Colby shook his head emphatically. And because Neil knew his brother didn't want to see Ellen, he didn't press the point . . .

The morning train, which was due at eight forty-five, arrived exactly on time. Later on this fact was taken into careful consideration by the police.

Neil Anson stepped out of the station into the warm sunshine and decided to walk up to the bank, knowing that this would give him a chance to rehearse a talk which he knew was going to be far from pleasant.

The front door of the bank was closed and locked, but the side door on Fifth Street could be opened by a uniformed guard, stationed there to admit employees and people who had business with the bank officials before the bank opened at ten o'clock.

Neil Anson approached the side door, tapped on the heavy glass, and nodded to the uniformed guard.

The man turned the key.

"I'm seeing Mr. Crenshaw," Neil said as the door opened.

"An appointment?"

"That's right."

"He's not here yet. You'll have to wait in the outer office until his secretary comes in."

"Yes, yes. I understand," Anson said, and pushed his way past the attendant.

CRENSHAW had no use for the type of bank office where the public could, so to speak, look over the banker's shoulder. He insisted upon a private, soundproof office which was completely closed off from the rest of the bank.

The only entrance to this office was through the reception room where his secretary had her desk and where the large number of chairs along the wall was a hint that at times there might be a long list of suppliants for Crenshaw's financial favors.

Neil Anson walked past the cashiers' windows and stood for a moment before a door marked:

President
Crenshaw Investment &
Rediscount Company
Crenshaw Contracting Company
Crenshaw Mortgage Company

There were, he reflected, not many of the town's enterprises that Crenshaw didn't have a finger in.

Neil braced himself for the meeting with Ellen and, opening the door, stepped into the outer office.

She wasn't there, although the door had been left unlocked. He stood for a moment waiting, expecting her to come out of Crenshaw's private office.

Then, as he noticed the covered typewriter on the desk, he realised that she probably was late this morning. The door opened behind him.

Neil turned, expecting to see Ellen, and saw instead the florid face and steel-grey eyes of Frank Crenshaw.

"Hello, Anson," Crenshaw said. Then he turned to glare at the desk and the covered typewriter. "Where the deuce is Ellen?" There was none of his past cordiality in the tone.

"How should I know where she is?" Neil asked, managing a conciliatory smile.

Crenshaw said, "You fellows spoiled her up there. Ever since she started working for me she's been dreamy-eyed about you two guys—"

"Is her work satisfactory?" Neil interrupted coldly.

Crenshaw glared at him. "Sit down and wait," he said. "I'll see you after a while."

He crossed the office, fitted a key into a complicated lock, jerked open the heavy soundproof door marked Private, and went in.

Neil knew that Crenshaw's telling him to wait was part of a softening-up process. He supposed that he should sit meekly until Crenshaw was ready to see the report he had so carefully prepared, but heard himself saying, "As far as I'm concerned, we'd better have this out right now," and he followed Crenshaw through the door into the private office.

Crenshaw tossed his coat over a chair and turned abruptly. "I'm not ready to see you now. Anyway, I have nothing to add to my letter."

"I don't want you to add," Neil said. "I want you to subtract."

"My letter speaks for itself, and I don't like the way you're busting in here," Crenshaw said. "I can press that button and have you thrown out."

"I want to know why you wrote that letter."

"The letter speaks for itself."

"I want to know why you wrote it," Neil insisted.

"I don't have to give any reason. The contract is plain enough."

Neil said angrily, "You didn't call those loans because of any financial reason or because you felt the security might be jeopardised. You called them because of purely personal reasons."

"What personal reasons?" Crenshaw asked.

Neil involuntarily turned his head toward the outer office.

Crenshaw said abruptly, "We won't discuss it, Anson. The letter stands. I'll expect you to have the loans refinanced within the thirty-day period."

"I stand a fat chance of getting any other backer interested in the business when you're pulling out this way," Neil said. Then he made a last attempt to salvage something from the interview. "Put yourself in my place and—"

"I don't have to," Crenshaw interrupted. "I'm calling my loans."

"For no reason?"

"Because I just happen to feel like it." Crenshaw said flatly.

"That's no reason."

"It is to me."

"It's not fair," Neil said a little more sharply.

"So I'm being unfair?"

"We think so."

"Well, I don't give a hoot what you two think," Crenshaw said.

"You think you can smash us, now that we've built the business up, and buy it in at ten cents on the dollar."

"We won't discuss it," Crenshaw said.

"Oh, yes we will. My brother and I—"

"Get out of here. I don't like your attitude," Crenshaw interrupted.

"I don't like yours."

"I said get out."

"Put me out," Neil said defiantly.

Crenshaw moved his hand towards the white push button on the side of his desk. Anson dropped his coat and briefcase and grabbed Crenshaw's wrist.

"Let's not be a couple of kids, Crenshaw," he said. "You're a businessman and I can show you—"

Crenshaw lowered his shoulder and gave a sudden, violent shove.

Neil Anson slammed his left fist into the banker's stomach. He hadn't really intended to hit him but only to keep the banker from pushing him back. His sudden anger turned a defensive gesture into a swift punch.

Crenshaw straightened up and started a roundhouse swing.

Anson moved his head, and the blow whizzed harmlessly past his nose.

"Why, curse you!" Crenshaw said. "I'll have you arrested for assault and battery! I'll have you thrown in gaol. I—"

He stood up and started another vicious swing. This time Neil Anson stepped inside of it.

He felt a deep satisfaction as his fist hit Crenshaw's jaw, jolting the banker backwards so that his legs became entangled with the swivel chair and he fell sprawling to the floor.

"And I guess that just about does it," Neil Anson said, picking up his topcoat from the floor.

He saw Crenshaw fumbling at a drawer in the desk and realised that in all probability there was a gun in that drawer, and Neil simply didn't care. He was too disgusted with the whole situation.

Neil closed the soundproof door behind him, then paused for a moment. He was standing facing the door when Ellen Jasper opened the door of the outer office. She saw him, and, looking embarrassed, said, "Good—good morning, Neil."

Neil waited for a second or two, then, deciding that Crenshaw had probably given up any idea of pursuit, walked over to Ellen.

She looked very pretty as she stood there, her unruly dark hair under the brimless hat contrasting with her grey eyes.

"We got your letter," Neil said coldly.

She looked hurt. "It wasn't mine. It was his." She jerked her head towards the door marked Private.

"Yes," Neil said, "his letter said that in view of information he had received which made him question the value of the security, he had advanced the due date. We hadn't given him any information." He regretted saying it when he saw the look in her eyes.

"But, Neil, you don't think I gave him any information!"

"I suppose he's tried to pump you about our affairs?"

"Neil, do you think I'd stand for anything like that?"

"Well, he's tried to, hasn't he?" Neil insisted.

Her grey eyes flashed angrily. "He's tried lots of things."

"Meaning what?"

"Meaning that I didn't know—I was foolish enough to suppose that other jobs would be like working for—for you and Colby."

"And that's not the case?"

"Definitely it isn't the case, but I'm not going to talk about it, Neil. If I can't be loyal to the man I'm working for, I can at least be loyal to the job."

"Why don't you leave him and his job?" Neil asked.

"I'm going to."

"Well, why not tell him that——?"

"Oh, Neil, please don't. I can't talk about it."

"Well," Neil said, "we did everything we could to try and make you happy and——"

"Neil, you—Neil, do you know the reason I quit my job and went to work here?" Ellen asked suddenly.

"No, I don't," Neil answered.

"Why don't you ask Colby?"

"It's none of my business."

"I had to leave, and when Frank Crenshaw offered me a job—he was one of the firm's best friends then—I thought he——"

She was close to him. "Neil, if you only knew. I thought you might have guessed."

Suddenly there were tears in her eyes. She turned away, jerked the cover off the typewriter and walked to to her dress cupboard, keeping her back towards him.

Neil accepted her gesture as a dismissal. He waited for her to turn and say good-bye. When she didn't, he opened the door, stepped out into the main part of the bank and walked towards the side door on Fifth Street.

The guard was not at the door at the moment, but his key chain hung from the key that was in the lock.

NEIL twisted the key, unlocked the side door and stepped out, pulling the door shut behind him. It didn't occur to him that he was leaving it unlocked.

He turned and started back down Fifth Street towards the railroad station, then remembered that his train wouldn't leave until late that afternoon and he might as well go to the Commercial Club. He turned into the alley which ran parallel to Front Street.

Just as he was nearing Sixth Street he saw a big convertible pull up to the kerb and slam to a stop. The girl was obviously in a hurry. She jerked open the door on the side nearest the kerb, twisted out from behind the wheel and slid across the front seat.

She was a very trim-looking girl, and as she slid along the seat her skirt rolled up under her, disclosing a neat pair of legs, commendable knees and the tips of suspenders.

Automatically Neil stopped to watch her.

She noticed his look and with an exasperated gesture grabbed at her skirt to jerk it down. Then she was out and slamming the door of the car. With her chin tilted at a haughty angle, she marched up Sixth Street towards Front Street.

At that moment Neil Anson heard a muffled clanging noise which, mingling as it did with the noise of traffic, might have just started or might have been going on for some time without his noticing it.

He had the impression too that some truck back in the alley was having motor trouble and that the engine had been backfiring.

Neil shifted his folded topcoat and suddenly realised with dismay that his right hand was empty. He had put his briefcase down on the floor in Crenshaw's office and had left it there.

That briefcase had been crammed with data on the financial structure of the Anson brothers' manufacturing plant. He hesitated, but then decided against going back for it.

He had so hopefully loaded the briefcase with papers that would persuade Crenshaw to reconsider his letter, and it was too humiliating to face the banker again. He'd wait until he got home, then write a curt letter asking Crenshaw to please send the briefcase express collect.

Neil had turned down Front Street before he realised that the ominous clanging he had been hearing was a burglar alarm.

He saw people running and a moment later he heard a police siren. Across the street someone was shouting about a stick-up.

Neil Anson saw a policeman tugging at his holstered gun. A radio car, with its siren screaming, skidded around the corner.

Anson drifted into the crowd of curious spectators. Almost immediately, an officer began pushing them back.

"Get going," the policeman shouted. "Break it up. This is a stick-up. There's going to be shooting."

Neil Anson ducked into a doorway and waited, looking across at the front doors of the bank.

Policemen with submachine guns trained on the doors were moving slowly forward, apparently expecting someone to come out.

Nothing happened. The doors of the bank remained shut. The streets became strangely silent, then deserted. Traffic was being detoured. Pedestrians had either run to safety or were jammed into doorways where they would be out of the way of flying bullets.

The burglar alarm continued its ominous clatter.

Police went in through the front doors. After a while the burglar alarm was shut off. People moved tentatively out to the sidewalk, ready to duck back. Then, after a few moments, when nothing happened, they were grinning at one another.

"False alarm again. Somebody must have stepped on the signal by mistake."

Neil didn't wait for an official verdict. He accepted the false-alarm theory without thinking very much about it and walked back towards the Commercial Club.

The afternoon paper carried a large picture of Frank Crenshaw on the front page. The banker had been shot down at his desk, evidently during a hold-up.

The paper also carried a picture of the cashier, George Durant, who had turned in the burglar alarm.

According to the story, someone had managed to get into the heavily guarded counting room of the bank where George Durant was making up the morning cash. The man had worn a very effective disguise—a plastic mask which entirely concealed his face.

Durant had been forced to lie down. The bandit had gagged him, neatly trussed his wrists and ankles with baling wire, then had helped himself to the cash which had just been taken from the vault.

The loss was estimated at some two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Cash on hand was unusually heavy because the bank was to make a payroll shipment to the Pleasantville foundry by armored truck that afternoon.

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Since the counting-room opened from the vault room and was closed off from the rest of the bank, the other employees had no idea anything out of the ordinary was going on until George Durant, although his wrists and ankles were still wired and a gag was almost suffocating him, had managed to roll over on the floor and kick the burglar alarm.

This had interfered with the bandit's plans. When he heard the burglar alarm the bandit had unbarred and unlocked the steel door which opened into the alley, where shipments of cash were transferred to and from armored trucks.

At that moment, Nathan Edwards, the bank guard, heard the burglar alarm and, seeing that everything seemed in order in the main banking room, had gone to the door of the counting room. To his surprise he had found his own key in the lock, the other bank keys hanging from his key chain.

He had jerked open the door and surprised the masked man escaping through the steel door leading to the alley. The guard had promptly shot at the bandit, who had returned his fire.

Edwards was certain he had wounded the man as he ran into the alley, and the police found a well-defined trail of blood drops leading from the door to the alley.

However, they were completely baffled when it came to following the bloodstains. The drops, shaped like exclamation points, showed that the man was running. The police explained that blood drops assume a distinct pear shape with motion and that when the motion is fast they take on the shape of exclamation points. A detective can tell a great deal from a trail of blood.

These blood drops led to an ash can in the back of the alley, some twenty feet from the steel door. There were traces of blood on the galvanised iron cover. A revolver was inside.

There were three discharged shells in the revolver, and ballistics experts had found that the three bullets embedded in the woodwork of the bank were identical with the bullets discharged from this gun. There could be no doubt that this was the weapon which had been used by the bandit.

However, there were no traces of blood leading from the ash can in any direction. The trail vanished as though the man had been whisked up into thin air.

The police theory was that the bandit must have been shot in the hand or wrist, which would account for the trail of blood drops leading to the ash can; that, when he had disposed of the gun, which he had been holding in his right hand, he was able to wrap a handkerchief over the wound.

This would have stopped the bleeding temporarily and he could have escaped by going through the alley door of one of the shops which fronted on the next block. There, a getaway car probably had been parked.

Edwards, the bank guard, stated that he had left his keys in the side door of the bank which opened on Fifth Street.

While this door was closed and locked, he explained, any bank employee on the inside could use the keys to open the door if he needed to.

Edwards had then gone to the basement, where the safe deposit vaults were located, to be on hand when the huge door swung open at nine fifteen. This was his daily routine.

Someone who evidently was familiar with this routine had simply gone to the side door leading to Fifth Street, unlocked it, removed the key chain, and used the special key to unlock the counting-room door.

George Durant had his back turned while he counted out money into packages, and apparently the bandit had time to slip the mask over his face and proceed with the hold-up.

When the bandit had stopped shooting, Edwards had run to the alley door through which the bandit had escaped. But to do this, he had had to open a steel-meshed door and run around the corner of a huge table. By the time Edwards reached the door, the bandit had disappeared.

Edwards had noticed then that Durant was choking on his gag. He removed the gag, and was undoing the wire on Durant's wrists when the police arrived.

At first the police had thought they were dealing only with a clever and daring holdup, but they soon discovered that a murder had been committed too.

The body of Frank Crenshaw had been found in his soundproof private office. He had been shot in the forehead and had died almost instantly. The gun which had been used, however, was not the one with which the bandit had shot at Nathan Edwards.

Since someone on the inside must have unlocked the Fifth Street door of the bank and then transferred the keys to the door of the counting room, the police were investigating the possibility that an early visitor to Crenshaw's office might have set the stage for the bandit.

Beyond saying that this visitor was a young upstate manufacturer, the police would make no comment.

There was no mention of Neil Anson's briefcase.

Neil folded the newspaper, got up from his chair, stretched, glanced at the clock on the wall of the reading room at the Commercial Club, and walked out.

Unless he could prove that he had left the bank well before the burglar alarm had sounded, he knew he was in for trouble—a lot of trouble.

He could go directly to the police, but if they didn't believe his story—and they easily might not—they'd probably hold him. Neil knew that when he talked to them he'd better be able to prove what time he'd left the bank.

Neil thought his problem over as he walked along. There was one person who could help him. She could testify that he was a block away from the bank at the time the burglar alarm started ringing.

Beyond the fact that she was a good-looking blonde with beautiful legs, Neil didn't know a single thing about her.

He decided it was very important that he see this girl before the police questioned him. He headed back to the block near the bank where she'd parked her car.

He smiled, remembering how she'd got out of the car. She must have been in a terrific hurry to get somewhere. The question was, where? She had started walking east on the north side of the street, going towards Front Street.

How far had she gone?

Anson walked slowly, looking at the stores. There was a stationery store, a haberdashery, a candy store, and then a beauty shop, the last door on the side street. He went in.

A young woman in a short-skirted white uniform which originally had been neatly starched, but now at the end of a hard dav looked rather bedraggled, came quickly towards him.

"Yes?" she asked.

Anson smiled and said, "I'm trying to check up on what happened this morning. Do you remember when you heard the burglar alarm down at the bank?"

THE girl, redheaded, blue-eyed, slim-waisted and quite plainly anxious to get back to her job, shook her head and said quickly, "We didn't hear it. We were busy and the hair drier was going. The first I knew was when —"

"Well then, perhaps you can give us a list of your appointments for this morning," he said, "particularly the—let's see—the nine-fifteen appointments."

She shook her head. "We didn't have any."

"You mean you weren't busy?" You—"

"Oh, yes, but we open at nine. We had appointments at nine, at ten, and eleven."

"Can you remember," Anson asked, "if one of your nine-o'clock appointments was a little late?"

"Yes. Miss Gloster was about twenty minutes late. She'd had to wait for a long-distance call."

"Can you give me her address?"

"I think it's the Redfield Apartments."

"Thanks. Miss Gloster is the blonde, isn't she?"

"Yes."

"Drives a cream-colored convertible?"

"I never saw her car. She's a blonde, though. She had an appointment for a permanent and a manicure. Now do you want to see any of the other appointments?"

"No, I don't think so. Thank you. Good night."

The redhead turned away even before Neil had finished speaking.

Some whim made Neil Anson press the pearl push button in a series of three short buzzes, a long buzz, followed by two shorts.

Almost instantly the door opened and the blonde stood on the threshold. She was smiling cordially, a smile which promptly left her face, giving place to a look of astonishment and indignation.

Neil suddenly realised that he had made no preparation for this interview, that he had not even planned an opening sentence, and the thought that the wrong approach could be disastrous for him left him stumbling and halting.

"I beg your pardon," he said. "I don't know if you recognise me, but I—"

And then he saw that she did recognise him.

The expression of scorn in her eyes was quite different from the smooth, almost toneless voice.

"Ah, yes," she said, "you're the man who happened to be looking directly at me as I got out of my car this morning. I imagine it took quite a little detective work to find me?"

She stepped towards him.

Neil said, "I admit I had to use a trick to find out who you were. You see, I'm anxious to——"

"I know," she finished for him, "to get a final answer. Very well, here it is."

Without warning, she swung her right hand, landing a stinging slap on Neil Anson's left cheek.

"Now," she said, as Neil stepped back in surprise, "a girl's legs really shouldn't be such a novelty, and for your information, Mr. Masher, women don't like to have men stare quite so pointedly."

Neil Anson stepped forward, caught her off balance, and pushed his way into the apartment.

"All right," he said, kicking the door shut. "If you want it rough, we'll have it rough. Now shut up and listen to me."

For a moment she looked frightened. Then she was cold and defiant. "I'll thank you," she said, "to get out of here right now. Otherwise I'll call the police."

Neil Anson said, "Whenever you get done with the dramatics, which, incidentally, you don't do well because you're frightened—your voice almost broke on that last one—we'll sit down and talk."

"All right," she said, "if you think I'm bluffing . . ." She moved towards the telephone.

Neil said casually, "My name is Neil Anson. The police are trying to find me to question me about a bank robbery and a murder. If you've read the afternoon paper you'll know all about me."

She whirled to look at him. "You! You're the man the police are looking for? What—what do you want?"

"I want to ask you some questions."

"Why?"

"Because the answers are important to me. I want to know if I can count on you to help me."

"To help you what?"

"Establish the truth. I need to prove my innocence. You can help me."

She sat on the curved arm of the over-stuffed davenport and looked at him interestedly. "Perhaps," she said, "I was a little abrupt."

"Abrupt is no word for it," he told her.

"Your methods," she pointed out, "are pretty informal and apt to be misunderstood. What do you want to know?"

"You had a nine o'clock appointment at the beauty shop. You were about twenty minutes late," Neil stated the facts coldly.

"How did you know?" the girl asked.

"And you were in a hurry," Neil Anson went on. "You slammed your car to a stop and scrambled out of it without——"

"Without bothering about how much leg I showed," she finished for him.

"That wasn't exactly the way I was going to put it."

"Well, it will do. Go ahead."

"You saw me coming out of the alley?"

"Yes."

"You know that I wasn't carrying anything."

"But you were."

"I had an overcoat over my arm."

She frowned and said, "I didn't notice what it was. I just noticed you had your arm up and were carrying something that looked a little bulky."

"That's not going to help," Neil said.

"I'm sorry."

"Now we come to the big question. Can you swear that the burglar alarm in the bank did not start ringing until after I had left the alley?"

SHE looked at him thoughtfully. "What does that have to do with it?"

"It may have a great deal. You see, the police are going to question me. They probably suspect me of murder and robbery. I was in the bank discussing business with Frank Crenshaw, the president—the man," he explained, "who was murdered."

"Go on," she said.

"And the evidence shows that the man who had been bound and gagged by the bandit was able to turn on the burglar alarm before the burglar left the bank. The burglar had to run through a back door and out in the alley. Since it seems pretty well established that the burglar alarm at the bank was turned on before the burglar left, I guess you can see the point I'm trying to make—and how important it is."

She puckered her forehead in thought.

"Well?" he said.

She spoke slowly. "There might have been two men, according to the papers. The bank guard left his whole key chain on the inside of the Fifth Street door. One man killed Crenshaw, then went to that door, unlocked it, took the keys, went to the door of the counting room and unlocked it, then walked back out through the Fifth Street door.

"In the meantime the other man slipped in through the Fifth Street door, put on a mask, and went into the counting room. So if you were the first man—"

Neil flushed. "You're trying to find some way of making me seem guilty just because of a personal grudge."

"What personal grudge?"

"You were mad because I looked at your legs."

Her eyes softened into a smile. "I did think you were over the odds when you came here," she said, "but I wasn't mad because you looked at my legs. Women never are, really."

"And I suppose," he said, touching the red place on his cheek, "this was just a friendly pat."

"No," she said thoughtfully, "that was a slap."

"That's what I thought."

"It's one thing to admire my legs when I'm getting out of a car, and quite another thing to trace me through the licence number, come to my apartment and try to make something of it, as though you thought I was asking for a visit which under the circumstances could only be obnoxious."

"So I gather."

"Now wait a minute," she said, smiling easily, "don't be so touchy. I don't mean that you're really obnoxious. I just meant that the idea that you'd mistaken me for a—oh, but . . .!"

She was staring at his wristwatch. "Is that watch right?"

"Yes."

She held out her own to compare the time. "You can't be right. You—oh, darn, my watch has stopped!"

"Well, don't be so worked up about it," Neil said. "You act as if it were really important."

"As a matter of fact, it is. You'll have to go."

Neil raised his eyebrows. "You mean you're expecting someone?"

"Would you mind leaving please, at once? Where's your hat? Oh, here it is. Please, Mr. Anson, please leave."

She seemed really panicky as she hurried to the door and held it open. Neil let himself be all but pushed into the corridor. The door slammed.

He walked over to the elevator, pressed the button, waited until the elevator came rumbling and rattling to the third floor, got in, and pressed the down button.

He left the elevator, crossed the lobby, and stopped to take a good look at the street before he went out.

He had started walking down the street when a light roadster slowed down as the driver looked for a parking space.

Neil had a good look at the driver's face. He stopped in surprise and watched while the car backed into a parking place a few doors down the street. A moment later the driver hurried towards the apartment house, pressed one of the buttons, and went in.

This was the man whose picture had been in the paper and whose face he had seen once or twice at the bank. George Durant, the man who had managed to kick the burglar alarm and spoil the bandit's plan to hold up the main banking room and get away with the thousands of dollars in the cashiers' cages.

Katherine Gloster seemed to be connected with the events of the day by a chain of remarkable coincidences.

And since Katherine Gloster seemed to think that he had been carrying something, that he might have opened the Fifth Street door for an accomplice, Neil didn't dare go to the police until he could find some way of proving that she was wrong.

The best way to do that was to find out more about the woman herself and her connection with George Durant.

Neil Anson decided he'd better try to get in touch with the redheaded operator at the beauty parlor. There was a lot more he had to know about Katherine Gloster.

He had walked about two blocks when a cruising taxi-cab came into sight. He flagged it. "Let me off at the corner of Front Street and Sixth."

The driver was inclined to be talkative. "Some excitement they had there at the bank to-day, wasn't it?" he said.

"I guess so," Neil said.

"Pretty big job. I hear the police know more than they're telling, though."

"Really?"

"Yes. I got a friend in the force. He told me they've got the murderer all set for the taking."

"That so?"

"Uh-huh. They're ready to pick him up. He's the one who engineered it. Some guy who needed money and had it in for Crenshaw. Not that there weren't lots of people who had it in for Crenshaw."

"You mean Crenshaw wasn't popular?" Anson said.

"You can say that again."

"Do the police know where the murderer is?" Neil asked.

"I don't know." The driver was suddenly noncommittal.

Neil settled back in the seat. "Well," he said, "I hope they catch him."

He got out at the corner and walked down to the beauty shop.

It was now quite dark. The front door of the beauty shop had a curtain drawn over the glass, and the word "Closed" was printed on the curtain.

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THE CORPSE WAS IN THE COUNTING HOUSE

Neil noticed that there was a light on behind the curtain, so he tapped gently on the door. He stood there for a few minutes, tapping at intervals, before he heard the sound of high-heeled shoes. The redhead opened the door. She was dressed for the street.

"We're closed," she said. "I was just switching off the lights. I—oh, it's you!"

"I wanted to get a little more information," Neil said.

"I told you everything I knew."

"This is a little different."

"Well, I'm just closing up. I want to get away from here before another woman comes in and tries to talk me into taking on a last-minute appointment."

"Do they do that?"

"I'll say they do."

"Well, let's get away from here, then."

She looked at him quizzically. "Meaning what?" she asked.

"We could go have a cocktail," Neil said.

"I don't drink cocktails. They make me ravenously hungry."

"That's not an incurable disease."

She laughed. "What's your name?"

Neil gave her his first name. "Call me Neil."

"And that's all?"

"You'll find it's enough."

She smiled. "I'm Gladys Leland."

"Do you run this place?" he asked.

"Uh-huh. Look, are you with the police or the bank, or what?"

"I'm just looking for information," Neil said.

"Well, I don't know what gives you the idea I can help you any. I don't know anything about the bank robbery."

"You've been here for a while?"

"A little over a year."

"Do you like it here?"

"No," she said, without adding why.

"Why not?"

"I don't know. I left my friends when I came here. I—do we have to talk about me?"

"No."

"That's better."

"Where would you like to eat?"

She looked him over carefully. "Do you have a car?"

"No. But there are taxis. How far is it?"

"Oh, a couple of miles. It's a roadhouse. They have little private dining rooms where we could talk. Look, I'll put it to you straight. If you're a detective and it ever got around that I was giving you information, it might help your business a lot, but it wouldn't do my business any good."

Neil nodded. "There's a taxi up at the corner."

"This place isn't exactly cheap," she warned.

"Neither am I," Neil told her.

She laughed and let him take her arm as they walked to the corner. "I think you're nice," she told him.

"I know you are."

"I don't ordinarily do this."

"What?"

"Get picked up on the spur of the moment."

"This isn't a pickup. This is an investigation."

"Okay, but perhaps you aren't going to get as much out of this as you think," she said.

"I'll take that chance."

She gave the driver an address, then settled back to look at Neil thoughtfully. "You don't look like a detective."

"What's your standard of comparison?"

"Just the movies."

She smiled up at him. "Anyhow, you don't scare me—and I hope you're on the expense account because I'm going to take on a carload of calories."

The roadhouse was a huge place which hadn't yet filled up for the evening. The head waiter came forward and Gladys said, "We want one of the dining-rooms, Henry."

He led the way past the dance floor and down a long corridor, and pulled back the curtain on a private booth.

Neil handed him five dollars. "We'd like cocktails right away."

"Daiquiri for me," Gladys Leland said.

When they had finished their drinks, Neil said, "I want some more information about Katherine Gloster."

"She's a customer. We don't talk about customers. I might tell you where you could go to brush up on local gossip. That's about all."

"Do you know George Durant who works in the bank?" Neil asked.

"When I see him, yes."

"Does he know Katherine Gloster?"

"Now you're getting right back to where we started."

"Have a hard day to-day?" Neil asked abruptly.

"Terrible."

"Do you do all the work?"

"I have two girls who help me," she said.

"Do you make any money?"

"A little."

NEIL took out his wallet and laid two bills, a ten and a twenty, on the table. "I'd like to pay you for whatever information you give me."

"Information about who?" she asked.

"Katherine Gloster."

"I told you we don't do that."

"Listen," Neil Anson said, "your words are going down a well where there's no echo."

She hesitated a moment, eyeing the thirty dollars, then abruptly she reached over, picked up the bills and tucked them in her purse. "I'm taking this chance because I think you're okay. What do you want to know?"

"Everything."

She said, "Women like to talk when they're getting their hair done or their nails manicured. Some women come in mainly to pour out their troubles. I don't say anything much. I just listen and nod and smile, and they get it all off their chests. Katherine Gloster doesn't do that."

"What does she do?"

She looked squarely at him and said, "Katherine Gloster asks questions."

"How long has she been coming to your shop?"

"Five or six months."

"What does she do?"

"She doesn't do anything. She's supposed to be a miss, but I think she's been married. I think she left her husband and probably gets alimony. Anyway, she has some kind of an income that keeps her going without working. She told me once that she was recovering from a heartbreak. Then she began to go out with George Durant."

"They're going steady?"

"I don't know how steady, but they go around together and he seems to be making quite a play for her."

"All right," Neil said. "What about George Durant?"

"He came here about a year ago. He was looking for a job as bookkeeper; then he finally decided to work for the bank."

"Does the bank take people on just like that?"

She laughed and said, "I'll say they don't. You should have known Frank Crenshaw."

"You mean he looked people up pretty well before he hired them?"

"He didn't. He had Alva Kenton do that for him."

"Who's Alva Kenton?"

"He does polygraph work. You know—lie detector," she explained.

"Oh."

"Before anyone went to work for the bank he had to go to Alva Kenton and be turned inside out."

"Is there enough work to keep a polygraph man busy in this city?" Neil asked.

"Not steadily," she said. "Kenton comes around once every two weeks and screens employees. He not only goes over the new ones, but some places, like the bank, have their men screened every four months."

"Do you know him?"

"Of course. He uses an office in my beauty shop—one of the back rooms."

"No kidding!"

"What's so startling about that?"

"Nothing, I suppose. It just hadn't occurred to me."

"It's a good deal. Kenton needs a temporary office. I have rooms to spare. He's only in the city two days a month."

"Where could I locate Alva Kenton?"

"You could write to him at—"

"I mean now," Neil interrupted.

"You could call him long-distance."

The waiter came to take their orders, and Gladys Leland ate her way through a shrimp cocktail, soup, salad, and a filet mignon two inches thick.

On the way home she said, "Would you like to see the morning paper?"

"Is it out?"

"No, the boys don't start distributing until much later. But they're printing the first copies now. We can drive by the newspaper office and get one. I know somebody there."

Anson nodded.

She leaned forward and spoke to the driver.

He nodded, swung a few blocks east to Chestnut Avenue and stopped in front of the newspaper office.

"Better let me run in," she said.

A few minutes later she was back with a paper damp from the press.

"Well," she said, "I guess they've cleaned up the bank job."

"What happened?" Neil asked.

She said, "My friend was telling me that they found a briefcase with the murder weapon in it. It had been left on one of the benches at the railroad station."

"The murder weapon?"

"Uh-huh. The gun that killed Crenshaw."

"In a briefcase?" Neil queried.

"That's right. That's what my friend said."

"Whose was it?" Neil asked.

"I think the name was Anson."

Neil reached over and gently took the paper from her, folded it, and said, "Thanks a lot. I'll read it later."

The driver drove to the address Gladys had given him, a three-story brick apartment building.

"Want to come up?" she asked. "I'll give you a nightcap."

Neil Anson put the folded newspaper under his arm. "Thanks," he said, then looked questioningly at the driver.

Gladys answered Neil's unspoken question. "You wait," she said to the driver. "It won't be long."

Then she flashed Neil her most cordial smile, took a key from her purse, and opened the street door. She walked up the stairs with quick, nervous steps to the second floor. "Come on, it's this way," she said, and led him down the dimly lit corridor.

"Brandy and benedictine?" she asked, as she opened the door.

"Now that," Neil said, "would really be an imposition. Actually, all I wanted to do was make certain you got to your apartment safely."

"Someone gave the stuff to me," she said. "I didn't buy it. So don't worry about that. Anyway, you've been swell to me to-night."

"It's been a real pleasure."

She switched on the lights and slipped out of her hat and jacket. "Let me take your hat and that newspaper. I'll put them in the bedroom."

She opened the bedroom door and closed it behind her. Neil heard the click of a light switch and the faint rustling of newspaper. A moment later she reappeared.

"There are cigarettes on the table," she said. "Just a minute and I'll get the drinks."

She produced a bottle of benedictine, one of brandy, two glasses, and poured out drinks.

"You know," she said, "you were nice about that."

"About what?"

"The taxi. You know, when I told him to wait. I aim to allow time for a drink, but that's all. A lot of men make a fuss about it. They tell the driver to go on about his business and they'll telephone him when they want him back."

"And what do you do?"

"I tell them very firmly that they're going to want him back before he could go to his depot and pick up the call."

"And then?"

"Then," she said, "they do want him, and fast. Some fellows think a three-dollar snack gives them the key to everything."

She picked up her glass and sipped her drink. Then she moved closer to Neil. "You haven't told me very much about yourself, and how come you're interested in this thing. Are you a private detective, F.B.I., or what?"

"Oh," he said, "I'm just interested."

Gladys got up suddenly. "Could you amuse yourself for a minute or two? I have to put out the milk bottle and do a couple of little chores. Anything I can do now shortens the mad morning rush."

She picked up an empty milk bottle from the shelf above the sink and said, "I'll be back in a minute. I have to go all the way down a flight of stairs. The milkman won't climb."

She unlocked and opened a back door and stepped out on to a service porch, and then Neil could hear her feet on the flight of wooden stairs leading down to the ground floor.

It was several minutes before she returned.

"Sorry," she said. "I had to leave a note for the milkman. I want some cream in the morning. You were going to tell me about yourself."

"What about me?"

"Oh, you know, the little things. You haven't even told me anything about yourself."

"It's pretty routine," he said, sipping the liqueur. "Listen, Gladys, I'm going to have to run along. That driver will be getting impatient down there."

"But do tell me something about yourself before you go."

"Oh, it's very dull," he said. "I have to do a lot of checking here and there—a lot of leg work."

"You must have got on the job pretty soon after you were notified of the robbery."

"I did."

"Well, come on," she said, "tell me. Is it a government agency or private work, or—?"

"Private."

"Are you in business for yourself, or part of a company?"

"A company."

"My, you're talkative."

He finished the drink, looked at his watch and said, "They pay me to get information, not to give it."

She said, "I wonder if we haven't been working at cross-purposes long enough, Mr. Neil Anson?"

He put the empty glass down slowly.

She said, "You probably wondered what was doing when I was putting the paper away. I thought I'd just take a look to see if there was a picture of the suspect in the bank robbery. There was. It's a good likeness."

HE got to his feet. "I'm afraid I can't explain now, Gladys. I'm going to have to go down and get the taxi."

"Don't worry about that," she said. "It's gone."

"What do you mean?"

"What do you suppose I was doing when I made that stall about taking the milk bottle down? I took it down the back way, then walked out front and told the driver that he didn't need to wait. He gave me a card with his number on it so you could call him any time you wanted to go home. Here's the card. He's number nineteen."

"And I suppose you also telephoned the police?" Neil said bitterly.

"Don't be a sap," she said. "I like you. I'm giving you a break. You don't seem like a crook to me."

"What do you want in return?"

"I want to know about you, and, believe me, I want to know all about you."

He thought for a minute, then said, "I'm just like a lot of other people. I was going to college, just getting a start, when the war came along. I left college and when I got back I somehow couldn't settle down. I know lots of guys who came back from the war and did fine in college. I didn't. I had ideas of my own. I like to invent things. I have a brother who has a lot of mechanical ability.

"We opened up a little manufacturing plant. We needed money. Frank Crenshaw had been a friend of my uncle. We went to him. He agreed to advance us money against orders we'd get and on assignment of accounts receivable. He had a clause in the contract that he could make all the loans mature in thirty days if he thought it was justified."

"And he did that?" she asked.

"Yes. He did that."

"Was it justified?"

"No," Neil said.

She looked at him thoughtfully, then said, "Frank Crenshaw's secretary used to work for your company, didn't she?"

"Yes."

"She was engaged to your brother and broke the engagement, left her job and came here to Pleasantville?"

"Yes."

"And you don't know why she did all that?" she asked.

He said bitterly, "I haven't the faintest idea why she did all that, or any of that."

"I know why," Gladys said.

"How do you know?"

"There's a statement from her—an interview in the paper. A man might read that and not know. A woman might read it and not know, unless she also knew you." Her eyes were slightly wistful.

"If you know why, I wish you'd tell me."

Gladys said simply, "She fell in love with you."

"She what?" Neil said.

"She found she had fallen in love with you," she repeated slowly.

"Are you crazy?"

"I'm not the least bit crazy. I read the first few paragraphs of her interview with the reporter. She loves you, she thinks you must have killed Crenshaw, and she thinks she is going to be called as the main witness against you. She'll kill herself before she lets that happen. I can understand how she feels."

Neil wanted to argue, but suddenly a lot of isolated events fell into a pattern in his mind, and he realised that Gladys was telling the truth.

"Did you shoot Frank Crenshaw?" she asked.

"No."

"Did you hold up the bank?"

"Don't be silly. Of course not."

"Things don't look too hot for you," she said. "What did Katherine Gloster say?"

"She told me she couldn't help me. She seemed to be trying her best to work out a theory that would make me guilty."

"Well," Gladys said, "I can tell you one thing, Neil. When she came into the beauty shop this morning she was as nervous as a cat in a thunderstorm. She couldn't even keep her mind on what she was saying."

"Did she ask you about the bank robbery?"

"I didn't hear the burglar alarm. I heard the siren. After a while someone came in and told us about the hold-up."

"What did she do or say?"

"I can't remember exactly what it was, but I remember thinking at the time that she acted a little queer."

"All right," Neil said, "what are you going to do about me?"

"The people who live across the hall are away on vacation. They left me the key to the apartment and asked me to take care of their canary. You can sleep in there. I'll give you some spare blankets and a pillow and you can sleep on the davenport. I'll call you for breakfast in the morning."

"Nonsense. I'll get a taxicab, go to a hotel and—"

"And be in gaol half an hour later," she said flatly. "Maybe you didn't read it in the paper, but there's a reward offered for information about you. Every taxi-driver in the city will be keeping his eyes open. I'm trying to give you a break."

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He looked at her. "Why?"

"Because you're a good guy, and because I don't want that little secretary to take a handful of sleeping pills and forget to wake up. I almost did that once myself. There's no percentage in it, but you don't realise that at the time."

Spreading the blanket on the davenport, Neil Anson punched the pillow into shape and took off his shoes. Then he sat up with his elbows on his knees, thinking the situation over.

The things Gladys had told him had left him terribly shaken. He had always thought of Ellen Jasper as his future sister-in-law. He knew he had felt happy when he was with her, but he'd never questioned whether his feeling about her was more than ordinary brotherly affection.

He kept telling himself that Gladys must be wrong. But even while he was trying to convince himself of it, he felt an inner warmth that he couldn't explain.

Neil had always looked up to his brother Colby, and he wouldn't have dreamed of doing anything that would hurt him. When Ellen had abruptly broken her engagement and gone to work for Crenshaw, Neil had felt so sorry for Colby that he never stopped to analyse his own feelings.

Now he tried to force his thoughts back to the murder of Frank Crenshaw and the spot it put him in.

He had left a briefcase in Crenshaw's office. Crenshaw had been murdered, and the police had found Neil's briefcase with the murder weapon in it. That kind of circumstantial evidence made things look pretty bad for him.

Neil realised that Frank Crenshaw's murderer must be someone who knew all about his habits, and who also knew a great deal about Neil Anson. This murderer was deliberately planting evidence which would convict Neil. To-day it was the murder weapon in Neil's briefcase. To-morrow what would it be?

Even if he went to the police and tried to find some way of explaining the present evidence, he had no way of knowing that the evidence wasn't being strengthened while he was explaining it.

Neil could see only one solution: He must find out who had committed the murder.

The police, of course, had assumed that the murder was connected with the bank robbery. Katherine Gloster had tried to show that the two crimes must have been related.

But had they been?

Neil began to check off the various facts on his fingers. First, the murderer must have been someone who had planned the crime and was waiting for an opportunity to put the murder scheme into execution. Two, the murderer must have had no detailed plans because being able to plant the gun in Neil Anson's briefcase was just a lucky break.

So the murderer must have been someone who knew Neil Anson, someone who knew that he had been in the office with Frank Crenshaw, someone who could have entered Crenshaw's private office after Anson had left, without being seen by Ellen Jasper.

As Anson considered these possibilities, he shook his head. They called for an impossible set of circumstances. And yet the thing must have been done.

Suicide could be ruled out. According to the newspaper, the police felt certain the gun had been fired from some distance—at least five or six feet.

The newspaper had said that Ellen Jasper hadn't suspected anything was wrong until the burglar alarm had begun to ring. Then she had run through the door of her office out to the main banking establishment.

A few seconds later, remembering what Crenshaw had told her to do in case of a hold-up, she had pressed the button which threw the spring lock on the door of the outer office and had pulled the door shut.

So, anyone who entered Crenshaw's office must have had a key to the door of Ellen's office, as well as a key to the door of Frank Crenshaw's office. And he must have been able to come in and leave without attracting any attention—an obvious impossibility.

The murderer had already showed a good deal of ingenuity in planting clues which led to Neil Anson as the murderer. There was no telling what new phony evidence he might be concocting.

Yet, in spite of the urgency of the situation, Neil couldn't keep his mind on it. He kept thinking, instead, of Ellen and what Gladys had said about her.

He stretched out and tried to sleep.

He had never in his life been so wide-awake.

He decided finally that there was only one thing to do. He pulled his shoes on, switched on the lights and looked in the telephone book. Ellen's phone wasn't listed, but information gave him her number.

He repeated it to Central. After a few rings, he heard the receiver being picked up and a sleepy voice was saying, "Hello."

Neil made his voice low-pitched. "This is Sergeant Newton of the police," he said. "This is Miss Jasper, isn't it? I'd like to talk to you, Miss Jasper."

"Do you want me to come to the police headquarters?"

"No. I'll come to your apartment."

"But I've told the police absolutely everything I know."

"I understand," Anson said gruffly, "but this is something new."

"Oh, all right. Come on up, only you'll find the apartment pretty well torn up. I've moved the furniture around to let the bed down." She gave him the address, and added, "Just ring the buzzer and I'll open the door for you."

"Right away," Neil said, and hung up.

He put on his coat, debated whether to tap on the door of Gladys Leland's apartment and tell her what he was doing, then decided against it.

He threw the catch on the lock of the back door so that he could get in without a key when he came back, called the taxicab company and asked to have cab number nineteen sent at once to that address. He said he would be on the kerb waiting for it.

Then Anson clicked off the light, closed the door quietly, and went down the back stairs.

He was relieved to see that the driver was the same one who had brought him and Gladys home. Now that his picture was in the papers Neil was getting by on borrowed time.

Neil gave the address of Ellen Jasper's apartment. When they drew up to the apartment house, Neil stretched and yawned like a man who has had a full day and is looking forward to a quiet evening at home.

"Okay," he said to the driver, "I guess this winds it up."

Anson waited until the cab had driven off. Then he ran up the steps and pressed the button opposite Ellen Jasper's name.

THE buzzer sounded immediately, and Anson pushed the door open, looked around for Ellen's apartment, and started down the hall.

She was standing at her door waiting for him, and as Neil came down the hall he kept his hat pulled down low, and his shoulders hunched forward so that she wouldn't be able to see his face until he was directly in front of her. Then he raised his head and said, "Good evening, Miss Jasper."

He had expected her to be startled. Instead, she said quietly, "Hello, Neil."

"Did you recognise me coming down the hall?" he asked.

She laughed. "I recognised you as soon as you said hello over the telephone. Did you think you had to pretend to be a detective to see me, Neil?"

"I thought your telephone might be tapped."

"It probably is," she told him. "The police don't think I'm being very co-operative. Come on in. The place is a mess, I'm afraid. I'd gone to bed."

She held the door open for him and Neil walked in.

Her manner was quiet and casual, but Neil noticed the rapid beat of a pulse in her neck.

"The police seem to have me elected as suspect number one," Neil said, as he sat down.

"They think I was your accomplice," she said simply. "Neil, why don't you give yourself up and let's try and get the thing straightened out?"

"Don't you see, Ellen, someone is deliberately framing me? Even if I could explain the evidence that's been planted so far, once the police put me in a cell where I couldn't do anything——"

"But can you do anything now, Neil?"

"I think so."

"Good," she said, with that quiet faith in his ability that he had always found so reassuring.

"I'm afraid it isn't going to be that simple, Ellen. We've got to find the murderer." Then he found himself adding, "Gosh, Ellen, we miss you down at the plant. It seems ——" He broke off as he realised that Ellen had, so to speak, moved into the enemy camp.

Ellen pretended not to notice. "Have you any idea who could have killed him, Neil?" she asked quietly.

"No," he said. "We'll have to try to figure that out together. And thanks for one thing, Ellen."

"What?"

"For having enough faith in me so you didn't ask if I had done it."

She smiled faintly and said, "Perhaps the shoe's on the other foot, Neil. I should thank you for not asking if I did it. The police have it reduced to a mathematical certainty. If you didn't do it, then I did. Or perhaps we both did."

"About the only way I can hope to get out of this is to have you convince the police that—— But the minute you try to do that——"

"The minute I try to do that they'll be sure I was your accomplice. I did a foolish thing, Neil. I tried to shade the facts just a trifle. I told the police I must have been out of my office where I couldn't see the door for as much as two minutes—long enough for someone to have slipped into the office and killed Mr. Crenshaw and then gone out again."

"What was so foolish about that?"

"They tripped me up. Actually I don't suppose it was more than twenty or thirty seconds. You see, I was trying to help you and I overdid it."

"Ellen, tell me what actually did happen?"

"I don't know. What happened in the inner office between you and Crenshaw?"

"I hit him. He opened a drawer and reached for a gun. I stepped out. I thought perhaps he'd follow me, so—"

"I could tell from the way that you were standing by the door that there'd been trouble."

"Do the police know that?"

"Don't be silly."

"Just what did you tell them?" Neil asked.

"As far as possible, I told them the absolute truth, but the truth is the thing that absolutely crucifies us."

"Let me have your side of it," Neil said.

She said, "I don't suppose you'll believe how dreadful I felt about having to type that letter that Frank Crenshaw wrote you. I started to throw down my pencil and walk out when he began to dictate it, then I decided I'd stay on. I thought perhaps something might happen so I could do some good."

"Do you know why he wrote it?"

"I know all about it," she said, "and it's not a very pretty story, but—"

Neil said, "Okay, I'm sorry I asked you, Ellen. The story I got is that he thought he could wreck the company, take it over cheap, capitalise on the goodwill we'd built up, and then sell for a profit that would be a capital investment from a bookkeeping standpoint instead of income."

She said, "I knew he couldn't fool you. But let's talk about the murder, Neil. We haven't a great deal of time."

Neil nodded. "All right, Ellen, tell me what you know."

She said, "I was upset after you left the office. Mr. Crenshaw stayed in his office. He didn't come out and he didn't buzz for me. You know that door of his has a steel lining and locks automatically as soon as it's closed. It's not just a spring lock; it's a steel bar that shoots in place—he was always frightened that someone he'd fleeced would manage to get into his office and—"

"I can imagine," Neil said, as she hesitated. "Don't tell me anything that you don't want to, Ellen. Just what happened after I left?"

She said, "The burglar alarm started. I ran out to the main bank to see what it was all about. As I went out I pressed the catch on the spring lock on my office door and pulled it shut behind me."

AFTER a pause, Ellen went on, "No one in the bank seemed to have the slightest idea of what was going on until the shooting started. We'd been drilled on hold-ups. It was sort of an obsession with Mr. Crenshaw. He'd told us to throw ourselves flat on the floor if we ever heard shooting."

"Then what happened?"

"We were there for—oh, twenty or thirty seconds, I guess. Then when the police came, Arthur Baxter, a cashier, unlocked the front doors."

"Did the police come in the side door?"

"No, but Carl Harman, Mr. Crenshaw's lawyer, had an appointment with him for nine-fifteen that morning, and he was pounding at that door, trying to get someone to open it and—"

"Wait a minute," Neil said. "That door was open, Ellen. I unlocked it when I went out. The guard's key was in it, with his other keys hanging from a key chain."

She said, "He'd been instructed lots of times not to leave his keys in the door."

"What I'm interested in is Harman," Neil went on. "If the door was unlocked, why was he pounding on it?"

"I guess he just assumed that it was locked. It should have been locked—it always was until ten o'clock."

"Did anyone go out that way, Ellen?"

"No one left the bank except by the alley door where the bandit ran out," she said positively.

"How do you know?"

"Well, the front doors were locked and—"

"But couldn't someone have followed me out of the side door and down Fifth Street?"

"Don't you see, Neil?—Mr. Harman would have seen them. He was walking down Fifth Street and the side door of the bank was where he could see it. He saw you go out."

"Then someone must have gone into the office after you went out?"

"I told the police that was what must have happened, and they pointed out that it must have been done while we were all lying on the floor during the shooting. Someone must have had a key that would unlock the outer door, the one I pulled shut and locked when I ran out, and they must have found some way of getting Mr. Crenshaw to come to the door and let him into his private office."

"Crenshaw's office was soundproof. Could he hear the burglar alarm?"

"Yes. There's an auxiliary alarm that sounds in his office whenever anything happens outside."

"Someone could have done it," Neil said doggedly, "because someone must have done it. Actually I can prove it. You see, I left my briefcase in Crenshaw's office. It was filled with papers. Someone must have taken the papers out and dumped them in the wastebasket and then left the bank carrying my briefcase. When did they find out what had happened?"

Ellen explained: "As soon as the police got in and started checking up on things. They had me open the door of my office and they sounded the buzzer in Mr. Crenshaw's office. When nothing happened they insisted that I open the door with my key and——"

"How many keys to his private office, Ellen?"

"Three. The janitor has one, I have one, and Mr. Crenshaw had one."

"Where did you keep yours?"

"On my key ring."

"All right. You went into the inner office. Then what?"

"We saw Mr. Crenshaw lying on the floor. The drawer of his desk was open and a gun had been jerked out, but it hadn't been fired. It was lying on the floor. The police thought Mr. Crenshaw must have heard the burglar alarm sounding in the bank, that he must have opened the drawer of his desk and grabbed the gun, and then someone shot him. Everything made it look that way. His hat was on the shelf in the coat closet, his topcoat was neatly hung up on its coat hanger in the closet, and——"

"Wait a minute," Neil said. "When I followed him in he just dropped his hat and tossed his coat over the back of a chair and——"

"Then he must have had time to do that after you left," she said.

Neil frowned. "I don't see how anyone could have got in that office during the time you were lying on the floor and—"

"Neither do the police," she said. They exchanged glances.

"And that," Ellen said, "makes the murderer you or me, or you and me."

Neil saw the worried expression in her eyes and pretended a reassurance he didn't feel.

"Never mind, Ellen," he said, "we'll make it all right. I just wanted to find out what happened. How soon did you get up after the shooting stopped?"

She said, "Neil, I got up right away. Some of the others didn't, I—that's where I stretched the time a bit when I told the police about it."

Neil had a sudden idea. "Look, Ellen, we can prove someone was in there."

"How?"

"By Carl Harman. He saw me leave the bank. If he noticed me—"

"He did. He knew about that letter Mr. Crenshaw wrote, and so he noticed you particularly—"

"So then he'll know I didn't have my briefcase with me," Neil said. "Don't you see? That will prove someone must have gotten into the office."

She gripped his arm. "Oh, Neil! That's swell! The police will believe him. They wouldn't believe me."

"This is a break, Ellen. I'll call him."

"No, Neil, you can't."

"Why not?"

"Because he'd notify the police."

"Once I can prove that I didn't have that briefcase with me when I left the bank," Neil said, "they can call in the whole lot of the police department."

"But, Neil, suppose he should say he didn't notice?"

"Then I wouldn't be any worse off than I am now."

"I know, but then he'd call the police and you'd find yourself in a cell. I'll call him and ask him."

"Will you, Ellen? When?"

"To-morrow, first thing."

"Why not now?"

She picked up a telephone directory and looked up the number. Then she lifted the receiver off its hook and said, "Please get me Gladwell 9478."

A moment later she said, trying to keep the eagerness out of her voice "Oh, Mr. Harman, this is Ellen Jasper at the bank. I'm sorry to call you at this hour, but it's quite important. You told me you saw Neil Anson leaving the bank. Did you see him clearly? Yes, I see . . . And did he—was he carrying anything . . . Yes, yes, his overcoat; anything else? You didn't? You're sure? . .

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THE CORPSE WAS IN THE COUNTING HOUSE

No, I—just wanted to know.

"If he had been carrying anything else you'd have seen him? I mean you'd have seen it? . . . Well, thanks—you are sure about it? . . . No, no, this isn't a cross-examination; I just wanted to make certain, to have someone who would back up my statement to the police. I know Mr. Anson wasn't carrying a briefcase. I told them so . . . Oh, that's swell, Mr. Harman! Thank you ever so much . . . Good-night."

She hung up and turned to Neil. "Oh, Neil, oh, my darling, it's all right! He says you definitely did not have a briefcase. He was sure he'd have seen it."

She came to him, and he thought she was going to hug him. Then she checked herself. "Wait, Neil. I'll phone the police."

He watched her lift the receiver, wondered what had caused such an abrupt change in her mood and manner.

He heard her get the police on the line, heard her telling of her conversation with Carl Harman. A moment later her expression changed to one of disappointment.

"Oh, I see. Well, thank you for being frank. Good-bye!"

She dropped the receiver into place and turned to face him. "Of all things," she said.

"What is it, Ellen?" he asked.

Her eyes filled with tears. "They seem to think I got rid of the briefcase for you."

"They're crazy!" he said. "Where on earth did they get that idea?"

"Oh, Neil, I don't know. They say it must have been done that way because there wasn't time for anyone to get in and kill him and get out again—and, of course, no one left the bank. They'd already asked Mr. Harman about the briefcase. Oh, Neil!"

"Wait a minute," Neil said. "If they told you that, Ellen, it means they're ready to pick you up as an accomplice."

"They told me to be at the district attorney's office at ten to-morrow morning."

"Well," Neil said, "I'll be there with you."

"Indeed you will not! You'll do nothing of the sort."

"Do you think I'd let you face that alone, Ellen?"

"Don't you see, Neil? Everything you said before is even more true, even more important now. Someone is deliberately planting evidence. Once the police get you they'll simply stop working on the case. They'll have all the evidence they want."

Neil hesitated.

"Oh, Neil, I'm right. I know I'm right. And they'll really be watching my apartment now."

"They really haven't anything on you," Neil said.

"No, but they will have. The murderer will plant clues on me just as he did on you, and then they'll have proof! It's up to you, Neil. You'll have to stay free, and try to find him. Please, Neil, please!"

"Okay, Ellen," Neil said. "I'll get him and break his neck. If he tries to plant evidence that will drag you into it, I'll—"

She leaned against him. "I know you will, Neil."

He tightened his arm around her, and then her hands were pushing against his shoulders.

"Neil, Neil, please," she pleaded. "Leave now. Oh, my dear, please go."

He turned and stepped out into the corridor.

"Good-night, Neil," she called softly.

"Good-night," he said, and walked down the corridor without once looking back.

Back in the empty apartment across the hall from Gladys Leland, Neil Anson spread out the blanket on the couch again and adjusted the pillow. Then he took off his shoes, collar, and coat.

To-morrow was going to be a hard day. Now that the police were trying to involve Ellen in the crime, Neil was determined to stay free until he could find the real murderer.

The apartment had been closed long enough to be stuffy, and Neil paddled to the window, opened it, and stood for a moment breathing the crisp night air.

Suddenly he saw a police car swinging around the corner. As he watched it, it pulled up to the kerb in front of the apartment-house entrance and stopped. The car doors opened, and two policemen jumped out.

Neil grabbed his clothes and the blanket and pillow and clapped his hat on his head. He opened the door, jerked it shut behind him, and ran across the hall to Gladys Leland's apartment.

He felt as though he'd been ringing her bell for hours before he heard her sleepy voice. "Who is it?" she asked.

"Me," Neil said.

She opened the door a crack and saw him standing there, his shoes in his hand, his coat draped over his arm.

"Police," he whispered. "Let me in."

SHE stared at him for a moment in sleepy surprise, then she let him in and pushed the door shut.

"I used the telephone in there," Neil said. "They must have traced the call."

"You do the looniest things," she said. "Why did you have to do that?"

"I had an idea."

"Well, don't get any more," she said.

"I won't."

She pointed to the bathroom. Neil hurried in there and began to dress.

Gladys' doorbell rang again.

"Who is it?" she called.

"The police."

"What do you want?"

"We'd like to ask you some questions."

Neil heard her open the door.

A man's voice said, "We want some information about the apartment across the hall."

"The people who live there have been away. They're due back in a couple of days. What's wrong?"

"We think someone broke in there."

"Well, for pity's sake, get the landlord, then. I'm catching cold here and——"

"Someone was in there just a little while ago. He used the telephone. We traced the call. You hear anything?"

"I was asleep."

"The window's open."

"I'll close it if you think there's any danger he might climb in."

"No. I mean in the apartment across the hall."

"Well, I'm sorry, but I can't help you. I'll keep my door locked. Thanks for telling me."

"We think the man has left; but he may be coming back, and we want to watch the place."

"Well, go ahead and watch."

The officer said, "You don't understand. We want to watch it from this apartment."

"Absolutely nothing doing," Gladys Leland said firmly.

"Why not?"

"Because," she said, "I'm a working girl and I need my sleep. I'm tired and I want to get a good night's rest. I've had a hard day and I'm going to have a hard day to-morrow."

"You can go right to bed. My partner wouldn't disturb you at all. He'd sit right in here next to the door. He'd leave the door open just a crack so he could——"

"I told you I need my sleep. Your man would watch that door for about an hour and then he'd start getting friendly with me."

There was silence for a moment, then the policeman laughed. "But this officer could stay here and protect you and——"

"Sure," she interrupted, "and when the shooting started the guy would miss the cop, send a couple of bullets through the door and probably hit me. Why don't you hide in the broom closet down at the end of the hallway? That will give you a view of the whole corridor. You can see the man the minute he comes up."

"Where is it?"

"The door to the left of the fire-escape."

"Okay, we'll look it over."

A moment later she opened the bathroom door and whispered, "You've got to get out of here. They're going to watch that apartment all night, and as soon as I leave to go to work in the morning they're sure to use a master key and come in and watch the place from here."

He nodded, trying hopelessly to think of some place to go.

She took a key off her key ring. "Here's a key to the shop. When things calm down, maybe you can——"

The doorbell rang again. She motioned Neil back to the bathroom and went to the door.

"What is it now?" she asked.

"Open up a minute. We want to tell you something."

Neil heard her unlock the door and a moment later he heard the policeman's voice only a few feet away.

"We're going to make a stake-out," the policeman said.

"What's that?"

"I'm going to stay in that apartment with the lights off and my gun ready. If he comes back, I'll shine a flashlight in his eyes and put the handcuffs on him."

"All right, go ahead. It's okay by me," Gladys said.

"Just in case you should hear anything you're to keep your door closed and locked. Understand?"

"I'll be in bed asleep."

"Okay. Stay inside. Good-night."

The door closed.

She opened the bathroom door again and said in a whisper, "It ought to be safe for you to leave in a few minutes. Go down the back way. Don't turn on any lights in the shop. You'll find a back room fixed up as a rest room with a couch. There are a couple of blankets in the bottom dresser drawer. When I come to work in the morning I'll bring a razor."

"You're a good girl, Gladys," Neil said.

She smiled up at him and said, "I seem to have gotten pretty involved in this."

"Back out any time you want to," he told her. "I don't want to get you in bad with the law. They're trying to drag Ellen into it now, and I can't let them catch me until I can clear her."

"You're sure?"

"Sure of what?" he asked.

"That they're after her, too."

"Yes. Ellen says they seem to think she was my accomplice. And they must be tracing all her calls."

She said, "Well, they're making a stake-out. That means they want to set a trap for you, and they won't want to scare you off by having any men outside. But I'll bet you that policeman will be over here for a cup of coffee when his relief comes on the job. By the time I've fed him some breakfast I'll know everything the police do."

"Do you think he'll talk?" Neil asked.

"He'll pour out his soul."

"Some of them are pretty smart."

She smiled and said, "The ones that keep giving you fatherly pats aren't."

Neil woke up in the beauty shop next morning with that feeling of unreality that comes from having slept soundly in a strange place. When he had dressed, folded the blankets, and put them back in the drawer, he took a look at himself in the mirror.

He looked pretty seedy, he decided. He needed a shave, a comb, and a clean shirt, but there wasn't much he could do about his appearance till Gladys came.

She came early, bringing some eggs and bread.

"There's a hot plate and an electric toaster here," she said. "You eat first and then shave. Here's a razor and shaving cream. Did you find the towels?"

"Yes. I've been prowling around, Gladys," Neil said.

"I wondered how you'd get along, particularly without lights."

"How about your cop?" Neil asked. "Did he show up?"

"Just as I said he would," she replied.

"What did you find out?"

"You go ahead and shave."

"No. Give me the low-down. I'll shave after I eat."

She said, "It's a good thing I had that cop over for breakfast. I found out a lot of stuff."

"Can you tell me anything about the briefcase?"

"I can tell you all about the briefcase. They found a lot of papers in Crenshaw's wastebasket dealing with the Anson Brothers' Manufacturing Company. It looks to the police as though you'd taken those papers out of the briefcase and thrown them in the wastebasket."

"Why do they think I'd have wanted to do anything like that?"

"Search me. It's the way the police reason things out. Your briefcase was found on a bench in the railroad station waiting room. Someone turned it in to the Lost and Found. The man there looked inside it, and when he found a gun, he notified the police immediately.

"What else?"

"The police went over the gun with a microscope after they'd tried for fingerprints and couldn't find any. They found some red fibres on a sharp corner on the gun-sight, and they found a whole lot of tobacco crumbs."

"Tobacco crumbs?"

"That's what the cop told me. He said there was some charred tobacco, some bits of charred cigarette-paper and fragments of tobacco that hadn't been charred. They made some kind of analysis, and found out it came from cigarettes. They even know the brand of the cigarettes."

"But what was all that tobacco doing in my briefcase?" Neil asked.

"If you want to ask questions," she said, "what was the gun doing in your briefcase?"

"The murderer planted it there."

"Then how about the tobacco?" Gladys asked.

"There was no reason for him to have planted the tobacco," Neil said.

"How do you know?"

"I don't," he admitted.

"You don't carry cigarettes in your briefcase?"

He shook his head. "I keep them in a cigarette case in my pocket. I don't smoke much. Three or four a day, and I seldom smoke before noon. What's all this about the burnt crumbs of tobacco in the briefcase?"

"Charred crumbs and bits of paper."

"As though someone had been using the briefcase for an ash-tray?"

"No. The cop said they didn't find any ashes."

NEIL said, "That's so strange that there must be a reason for it—and the reason may be important."

"Well, eat your breakfast. Then I've got to tell you some bad news."

"What's that?" he asked sharply.

"No, no. Keep your shirt on," she said. "As far as I know, nothing's happened to Ellen Jasper. It's about Alva Kenton."

"What about him?"

"He's been called in to question all the bank employees about the hold-up and the murder. He's going to be here to-day."

"Well," he said, "maybe he'll uncover something."

"I guess you don't remember what I told you," she said. "He does his work here."

"Oh-oh!" Neil said.

"And," she went on, "this is the only place I have to hide you."

"Then I'll have to take a chance on moving on. After all, I can't do much if I'm always hiding. I might as well be in gaol."

"But as soon as you show your face they'll arrest you. You've made your gamble now, Neil, and you'll have to see it through. The time for you to have surrendered was when you first knew you were wanted. It's too late now."

"But I can't do any good by hiding all the time, Gladys."

"I know you can't. I've been thinking about that, too. You'll have to work at night and keep out of sight during the day. I have one place where I can put you to-day. It won't be comfortable, but it should be safe. Come on I'll show you."

She led him to a storage closet. "The partitions don't run all the way to the ceiling," she said, "and you'll have to be careful you don't sneeze or cough or anything because anyone in the next room could hear you—and that's where Alva Kenton will be working. On the other hand, you can hear what goes on."

"Why the sudden desire to put everyone on a polygraph?" he asked.

"I gather that the police have an idea the murder of Frank Crenshaw and the robbery of the bank might not have had anything to do with each other," she said.

"Then it must have been a pretty remarkable coincidence."

"Well, aren't all coincidences remarkable?" she asked.

"Sometimes."

"For instance," she went on, "yesterday I didn't even know you, and now I—well, what am I doing?"

He met her eyes and said, "Compounding a felony."

She smiled. "You're trying to frighten me now, aren't you? I somehow have a feeling that no girl who trusted you ever regretted it."

"That," he said, "makes me feel too innocent."

"Oh, I don't worry about it," she said, and, turning suddenly, she left the room.

Neil Anson sat on a camp stool in the crowded supply closet. Over the partition which stopped about three feet from the ceiling, he could hear the sound of men's voices and knew that Alva Kenton was getting ready to set up his lie-detector machine.

Neil could hear Gladys Leland's voice, too, but he couldn't distinguish the words.

Then, as a door opened, the voices became clearer and he heard a man saying, "Nonsense, Gladys. I might as well use this same room that I've always used. It's perfectly comfortable. I'd be interfering with your business if I took one of the other rooms. People can wait in that room where the chairs are and I'll take them in here one at a time."

"Well, all right," Gladys said. "Only I thought perhaps the other room—"

"No, no, Gladys. That's all right. Now let me set up the machine here and I'll get going. Carl, will you give me a hand, please?"

Neil straightened up. Kenton must be talking to Carl Harman, the lawyer—the one witness who could corroborate Neil's story and prove that some other person must have taken his briefcase out of the bank. He'd said that he saw Neil leave and noticed that he didn't have a briefcase with him.

Neil was able to hear what Harman was saying as distinctly as though he had been standing in the room. He gathered that the conversation was taking place just outside the partition.

"There are some developments in this case," Harman said, "that leave me rather unsympathetic to the police theory."

"Don't you think Anson killed him?" Kenton asked.

"Frankly, Alva, I don't. I was coming down Fifth Street, walking slowly, smoking a cigarette when I saw Neil Anson come out of the side door of the bank. I would say that was several minutes before the burglar alarm went off. He had his coat over his arm, but he definitely wasn't carrying a briefcase."

"Don't you think he might have had it in his hand with the coat draped over it?"

"No, he had his coat over his arm. I'm thoroughly satisfied that he not only wasn't carrying a briefcase but that he wasn't carrying anything at all."

"You've told the police about it?"

"Yes, I have. As a matter of fact, I didn't really think about it until Crenshaw's secretary, Miss Jasper, called me up last night. Then I realised that if Anson hadn't been carrying the briefcase when he left the bank, he couldn't possibly have left it in the station yesterday afternoon with the gun in it."

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THE CORPSE WAS IN THE COUNTING HOUSE

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"Then the person who murdered Crenshaw must have killed him right after Neil Anson left the office," Alva Kenton said. "That person must have got hold of Anson's briefcase and must have entered and left Crenshaw's office without anyone seeing him. That's pretty much of an impossibility, Carl."

"That's the way the police feel," Harman said. "Of course, that puts Miss Jasper right on the spot. The police think Anson must have handed his briefcase to her and that she hid it for him. They've checked the time element very carefully and they're quite convinced that no one could have entered or left that office after Anson went out."

"Well, that sounds pretty sensible to me, especially since any other explanation seems to be impossible," Alva Kenton said.

"You don't get what I'm driving at," Harman said. "Why should Miss Jasper have been an accomplice?"

"Why not? She worked for Neil Anson. She had an opportunity to see a lot of him. And——"

"You still don't get it. Why should she have been his accomplice? Why couldn't she have been the one who murdered Crenshaw?"

"You mean she killed him all by herself?"

"Exactly," Harman said.

"Then the murder wasn't connected with the hold-up?"

"Of course not. The hold-up is what ruined her plans. You knew Crenshaw and I knew him. He was a hard man to work for. When Anson left, Crenshaw called Miss Jasper into his office. She'd probably had to put up with a lot before. This time she shot him. No one would have heard the shot, since the office was soundproof.

"Then she went back to her office and started typing. She probably planned to go off on an errand or something; and when the body was found, she could say someone must have come in while she was out. The hold-up and the burglar alarm ruined her plan."

There was a moment's silence, then Kenton said, "Carl, I believe you have something!"

"Okay," Harman said. "Put her on the polygraph and sweat it all out of her."

Anson heard a door open and then close; then for several minutes there was complete silence.

Sitting there in the semi-darkness of the storage closet, Neil Anson suddenly realised just how black a case could be made against Ellen if the police stopped thinking of him as the murderer. Then it came to him with a shock that for him to prove himself innocent would be to prove Ellen guilty.

Neil found himself wondering about the evidence against her. Perhaps self-defence or some sudden provocation . . . ?

His thoughts were interrupted by Kenton's voice as he began the first polygraph test.

"Now I'm going to adjust this pressure cuff on your arm. That enables the machine to pick up changes in your blood pressure. This clamp I'm putting on your hand measures your skin resistance. This band around your chest measures differences in the rhythm of your respiration. I want to impress upon you the necessity of telling the absolute truth in all matters . . ."

And so the preliminary patter went on—the attempt to put the subject at his ease, yet at the same time to impress upon him the importance of co-operating in the test.

Neil heard the pulsing beat of the machine as the paper tape started to revolve and the three needles swung back and forth, leaving a graph line along the paper. Alva Kenton's questions were asked in a voice that did not change with the nature of the question.

"Did you have breakfast this morning? Have you embezzled any money from your employers at any time? Do you smoke? Do you have any knowledge of the murder of Frank Crenshaw? Do you take sugar in your coffee? . . ." The important questions were sandwiched in between routine ones.

Two of the bank employees went through the long examination placidly. With the third, Neil sensed a certain tension.

It wasn't until Kenton had gone through his preliminary patter to put the subject at ease that Neil realised the reason for the tension.

Kenton said, "Now if you'll make yourself comfortable in the chair, Mr. Durant, we'll go ahead with the test. Is your first name George? Do you smoke?" Neil knew then that this was George Durant, the teller who had been held up in the counting room of the bank.

As the questioning went on, Neil got the impression that for some reason a definite finger of suspicion had been pointed at George Durant. He listened to the steady flow of the questions: "Have you ever been arrested?"

"No," came the answer.

THE questioning went on. "Have you ever embezzled any money from the Farmers and Manufacturers Commercial and Savings Bank?"

"No."

"Did you have breakfast this morning?"

"Yes."

"Was the card you just picked out of the pack I gave you the four of hearts?"

"No."

"Do you have any guilty knowledge of the robbery at the bank?"

"No."

"Have you ever been convicted of a felony?"

"No."

"Do you have any knowledge of the death of Frank Crenshaw?"

"No."

"Did you lie to the police in any of the statements you made about what had happened at the bank yesterday?"

"No."

"Was the card you picked out the ten of diamonds?"

"No."

The questioning droned on repetitiously for almost half an hour. Then Kenton said, "Now I'm going to ask you to take a brief rest, Mr. Durant, and then I want to ask you some more questions."

"Say, what's the idea?" Durant said angrily. "I've taken these tests before. I know a routine test when I see one. You're giving me the works this time."

"This isn't a routine test," Kenton said dryly. "This is different. There's been a hold-up and a murder. Naturally the tests are different this time."

"Well, it's different from the test you're giving the others."

"How do you know it is?"

"Because I—well, I think it is. You're taking more time with me."

Kenton made no comment.

"And you're asking me to come back," Durant went on.

"How do you know that I haven't asked the others to come back?"

"Oh, all right," Durant said, "I suppose I have to go through all this monkey business. If I didn't I suppose you'd say I was acting suspicious. But if I hadn't taken a chance on getting shot and set off the burglar alarm, the bank would have been out a lot more dough. I saved the bank money and this is the thanks I get."

"I'm only carrying out the instructions that were given to me," Kenton said. "Now just smoke a cigarette and try to get yourself composed so we can go ahead with the test. I can't get any accurate readings while you're angry or upset."

"Well, I'm going to keep right on being angry as long as you keep on giving me this kind of deal," Durant said.

"The longer you do, the longer you're going to have to stay here," Kenton said. "I have my instructions. I'm representing the bank. You're working for the bank. What do you want to do?"

"Oh, I'll stay here and take it, I guess," Durant said sulkily. "How much longer am I going to have to be here?"

"That's entirely up to you."

"Some of the other guys have already taken their test and gone back to the bank," Durant complained.

"They didn't have the opportunity you had to see the hold-up man, to know how—"

"Oh, all right," Durant interrupted. "I guess I'm stuck. I had some things to take care of this morning, though. Is there anyone out there who can take a message back to the bank?"

"Nathan Edwards."

"How much longer am I going to be here?"

"Perhaps another hour."

"Well," Durant said, "the bank wants some papers on a loan. Look, ask Nathan Edwards to go to the bank and wait for a call from Dr. Lancaster, will you? Lancaster was supposed to let us know what arrangements have been made about delivering them."

"You think he'll call within an hour?"

"Probably," Durant said.

"All right, I'll tell him. Now you sit there and cool off. I'm going out and leaving you alone for a while. Settle down and relax."

Neil heard a door open and close. Then after a moment he heard the sound of quick motion, then Durant's voice, apparently speaking to a telephone operator, saying, "South 8169."

After a pause, Neil heard Durant's voice again, low, insistent. "Get Dr. Lancaster on the phone right away. Hello, Doctor, this is G.D.62. Look, Doc, they're giving me the works. They're suspicious. Now look, there's one angle we've got to cover. You'll have to make this guy immune."

There was a short pause, then Durant went on, "Now wait a minute. Keep your shirt on. How did I know you were going to turn this other angle into a gold mine? We're in this, and we've got to stay with it. Look, I haven't time to argue. Call up the bank in fifteen minutes. Ask for the man I instructed about the Lancaster loan and tell him to come out and pick up the papers that were to be delivered as collateral. You won't know this guy's name. Give him the works. Immunise him on everything. Okay, Good-bye."

Neil heard Durant put down the receiver and begin to pace up and down the room. After a while there was a sound of the door opening.

"Well, are you feeling better?" Alva Kenton asked.

"No!" George Durant told him, "but let's get this finished."

"Let me feel your pulse." After a moment's silence, Kenton said, "Look, Durant, this isn't going to do you any good. You're angry and you're excited. You know as well as I do we have to have a calm, detached attitude to run a good test. Why don't you take a walk and relax?"

"A walk?" Durant asked.

"Yes. Go out and take a walk around the block. Inhale deeply. Keep your mind entirely off this business we've been talking about. When you come back we'll go on the polygraph again."

"Going over those same questions?" Durant asked.

"Probably different ones," Kenton said. "Why? Are you worried about it?"

"I'm not worried. I'm just angry."

"Well, calm down," Kenton said.

"All right, I'll take a walk. I can stop in at the bank and——"

"No. Don't go to the bank. Walk around the other block. Don't talk to anyone. Take a good brisk walk, then come back and smoke a cigarette and settle down."

"All right."

Again the door opened and closed. Neil wondered why Kenton suddenly seemed so anxious to have Durant out of the way.

Once more he heard a door open and close; then a woman's voice, which he somehow felt he had heard before, said in a half whisper, "I saw him going out."

"I told him to walk around the block," Kenton said.

"How's he going?" the woman's voice asked.

"There's something wrong."

"Where?"

"Either with your information or with mine. You're sure there can't be any mistake?"

"Not the faintest possibility in the world," the woman's voice said emphatically.

"Well, of course," Kenton said, "there have been cases where——"

"I know. Mistaken identity. But this isn't one."

"You'd better leave," he said. "He may be back any minute."

"Is he suspicious?"

"Terribly. I left him in here alone. I think he used the phone. He's worried. Here, I'll go out to the alley door with you."

When he heard them leave, Neil peeked out of the closet and saw that the door Kenton and the woman had gone through was open a crack.

He decided to take a chance and come out of the closet long enough at least to get a glimpse of the mysterious woman's back.

Luck was against him. Just as he reached the door he saw a man coming towards him. There was nothing to do but brazen it out. Neil pushed the door open and sauntered out.

The newcomer stood aside and asked, "Is this the room where we're taking the polygraph tests?"

Neil nodded and walked past him.

A moment later a man, who Neil judged must be Alva Kenton, came hurrying back from an adjoining room. He brushed past Neil, hardly seeing him, and said with routine courtesy, "If you'll just be seated a few moments, it won't be long. I have one ahead of you."

He went into the room where the polygraph was, and Neil heard him say apologetically, "I'm sorry. We're finishing up a test with another man. If you don't mind, please wait in the other room."

There was a row of chairs in this room and for a moment Neil thought of sitting down and pretending he was waiting his turn to take a test, but he was afraid he'd be recognised, so he kept on going, hoping to find Gladys Leland and another hiding place. But the next door that Neil opened led directly into the reception room of the beauty parlor. Two women who were waiting glanced up at him, then went back to the magazines.

Neil knew that if he went towards the inner rooms of the beauty shop, he'd really attract attention. Once that happened, he would almost certainly be recognised. So, keeping his manner as casual as possible, he strolled out through the street door of the reception room.

Luck, for a change, was with him. A taxi was waiting at the rank near the corner, Anson signalled it and said to the driver, "Do you know where Dr. Lancaster's office is?"

"Sure, I know him," the driver said. "I'll take you there. He has his office in a big house out on Hemlock."

"That's the one," Neil Anson said.

Except for the brass name plate beside the front door Doctor Lancaster's office looked like a large private house. The front of the house seemed cheerful and homelike, but a small sign in the driveway said, Patients use rear entrance, please.

HALF resentfully the taxi driver said, "I don't know why he has to make his patients go around to the back as though they were delivery boys. He seems to have lots of business, though."

"Local people?" Neil asked.

"No. Most of them are from out of town."

"What sort of a practice does he have?" Neil asked, and instantly regretted the question.

The taxi-driver turned to take a long look at him. "Say, mister," he said, "don't you know?"

Neil shook his head.

"Well, how come you're going to him?" the taxi-driver asked.

"I want to sell him some insurance," Neil explained.

"Oh, that's different. He's one of those—what do you call 'em—psychoanalysts."

"Oh, I see."

The driver swept the car around the gravel driveway. "Want me to wait?" he asked.

"You might as well," Neil said. "I don't think I'm going to be long."

"There's a parking place over here where cabs can wait," the driver said. "I've waited here before. You go right in that door there on the side. It used to be a sun-porch and now they've closed it in and fixed it up for offices."

Neil got out of the cab and walked across the gravel to the door marked Patients' Entrance, and opened it. A bell jangled melodiously, a door at the far end of the small room opened, and a poker-faced young woman in a starched white uniform said, "Good morning."

Neil had to take a chance. "G.D.62," he said.

The nurse frowned slightly and said, "Come this way, please."

She led the way down a corridor which had doors on each side like a hotel hallway. She opened a door and said, "In there, and relax, please."

Neil Anson sank into an easy chair and realised that he had never sat in a more comfortable chair in his life. It was made to conform to the contours of the body and apparently was upholstered in foam rubber.

"I believe you're to see the doctor right away," said the young woman.

Neil nodded.

"Just a moment," she said.

She stepped out, closing the door behind her. Neil relaxed, put his head against the soft back of the chair and heaved a deep sigh.

A moment later the nurse returned to the room. "Take off your coat, please," she said briskly.

For a moment Neil hesitated; then, getting to his feet, he slipped off his coat. She motioned to his left arm. "Roll up your sleeve."

He did so.

Suddenly he felt the coldness of cotton soaked in alcohol, then the jab of a hypodermic.

Before he could jerk his arm away, he felt the drug being injected.

"What's the matter?" she asked, holding tightly to his wrist. "You almost broke the needle."

"You surprised me," he said.

"I'm sorry. I thought you knew this was part of the treatment."

"You must have hit a nerve."

"I didn't. I went just under the skin," the nurse said. "You're jumpy. You can't be like that when the doctor sees you. You must know that."

She turned and left the room, taking the hypodermic with her.

Neil was uneasy about the injection. He tried to squeeze the liquid out, but succeeded only in making a red spot on his arm.

For a moment he thought of going back out to the taxi, but if he did, he wouldn't have learned anything. So he rolled down his sleeve, put his coat on and settled back into the chair.

After a few moments a delicious sense of well-being took hold of him. He knew that he was in a great deal of trouble; that the police wanted him for murder, that his chance of escaping arrest were getting smaller all the time and that, in playing a hunch, he had probably put himself in the hands of an enemy.

But he had no feeling of apprehension, only a tolerant, bemused contemplation of these dangers. He felt as though it was all happening to someone else.

After a few moments Neil thought he would cross his legs, but when he started to move them he found that he had no inclination to make even the faintest physical effort.

The door opened.

The man who came into the room was a lean, tense man with a long, straight nose, a small, close-clipped, black moustache, and a firm, thin mouth.

"Good morning," he said.

"Hello," Neil said.

"Look at me, please."

His tone was compelling and Neil found himself obeying.

"You wish to be given immunity to the polygraph?" the man said.

"That's right."

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"The drug is beginning to take effect?" the man asked.

"I guess so," Neil said, still looking into his eyes.

"At this time you will not need to speak," Dr. Lancaster told him. "You are perfectly relaxed, you are about to drift into a brief period of restful unconsciousness, a sleep that will soothe you and leave you refreshed. It is an easy sleep, a restful sleep. You can feel the sleep coming on. There is warmth, there is—"

Suddenly Neil felt desperately afraid and tried to struggle to his feet.

It was too late. The hypnotic power of Dr. Lancaster's eyes held him. He couldn't make any physical effort.

"Do not struggle," the man ordered, without changing the even tempo of his voice. "You must co-operate. The only way you can be given safety is to co-operate. You wish to be safe. You wish to be free of worries. But you have been nervous, you have been frightened. You will sleep. Sleep will soothe you and rest you. Fear will slip away from you. What is your name?"

To his surprise, Neil heard his own voice saying, "Neil Anson."

"Ah, yes, Neil Anson," Dr. Lancaster said, "and, unless I am mistaken, the police want to arrest you for murder. Is it not so, Mr. Anson?"

"Yes."

"You have been avoiding the police," the voice went on. "You are worried, you are afraid. But presently sleep will come upon you and in sleep you will find encouragement and protection. You must not fight me, Mr. Anson. You must not struggle with your will to resist mine. You have placed yourself in my power. You must do as I say.

"Right now you are interested in complete restful sleep, during which time your mind will be relieved of all its worries. But first of all you must tell me how you came here. You resorted to trickery, did you not, Mr. Anson?"

A part of Neil's mind seemed to struggle against answering, but he already seemed to be half asleep, and he heard his own voice as though it came from a great distance.

"I heard George Durant tell you about his accomplice. I took that man's place."

"And how did you hear all that, Mr. Anson?"

"I was hiding in a room at the beauty shop."

"At what beauty shop?"

"At Gladys Leland's beauty shop."

"Ah, yes. And the polygraph operator was giving tests?"

"Yes."

"And why did you come to me?"

"Because I didn't murder Frank Crenshaw and because I knew there was something wrong. I had an idea George Durant knew something about what happened. I also had an idea he had found out how to beat the lie-detector."

"What made you think that, Mr. Anson?"

"I heard Durant telephone you."

"You overheard that telephone conversation?"

"Yes."

"We must tell Mr. Durant to be more careful, but that is something which need not concern you, Mr. Anson. You are now about to sleep. You are drifting away into unconsciousness. Your mind will be relieved of worry. You will be safe. You will fear no pursuit. You will sleep . . . sleep . . . sleep."

Neil tried to fight the blackness which seemed to be surrounding him.

"Don't struggle," Dr. Lancaster said sternly. "Sleep."

It was an effective order.

Blackness settled around Neil Anson and in a few moments he was unconscious.

Neil woke up in what seemed to be a basement room. It had no windows—air came through a grating in the concrete walls—and was softly lit by fluorescent light. It seemed to be soundproof.

Somehow he felt strangely rested. It was as though all the cares and worries had left his mind. He might have been returning from a six weeks' vacation.

But when he woke up he had the feeling that there was something he must do, some one thing which must be disposed of.

Then Neil noticed the table. A reading lamp flooded a pad of paper with brilliant light. There was a desk pen by the paper, and a chair was drawn up to the table.

Almost mechanically Neil walked over to the table and sat down. He had a sudden urge to put words on the paper.

He picked up the pen and began writing: I, Neil Anson, make this confession entirely of my own volition, and for the purpose of easing my conscience.

With a start, Neil caught himself. He had been on the point of writing "robbed the bank and murdered Frank Crenshaw."

He threw the pen down. He grabbed the sheet of paper and tore it into small fragments. Then he looked around the room for a place to throw the scraps. There was a door which led to a bathroom, and Neil carried the shredded bits of paper in and flushed them down the toilet.

He was trembling and bathed in perspiration.

He knew something of posthypnotic suggestion and its power, and he steeled himself to resist it. He would not yield to the posthypnotic suggestion which he now knew had been planted in his subconscious mind. He would not write out a confession.

For a while he felt better, felt that he was, at least for the moment, master of himself. Neil's mind was clear now. He had always thought that it was impossible to hypnotise a person into doing something which shocked his sensibilities.

However, what he had learned about hypnotism in a general way had been based upon experiments with subjects who were normal and in their right minds. The unknown drug which Doctor Lancaster's nurse had injected into his arm apparently made all the difference.

He was feeling entirely well now, ready to fight. He would resist any more hypodermics, resist any more hypnotic treatments.

Neil noticed the fountain pen on the floor. He picked it up and put it back on the table. Then he tried to turn off the annoyingly bright reading lamp and found that there was no switch. And the lamp was screwed tightly to the desk.

Neil looked around the room. The bed he had been sleeping on was soft and comfortable. There was only one chair, the one in front of the table. It was a swivel chair which was anchored to the floor so that it could not be moved away from the table. There was no other furniture in the room.

Neil wondered what time it was and glanced at his wrist. He found that his watch had been taken from him. He had absolutely no idea whether it was day or night. He might have been in a hypnotic sleep for an hour or for a day.

NEIL fought against the invitation of the illuminated paper on the desk. He paced the floor for a while, then settled down on the bed. He was full of contempt for Doctor Lancaster. He was going to fight it out.

He heard an odd sound, apparently inside the concrete wall. Then suddenly, as though a catch had been released, a slab of concrete swung down on hinges revealing a tray of steaming food.

There was a thick steak, a stuffed baked potato, a steaming cup of coffee, bread and butter, and a small plate of spinach.

Neil realised that he was ravenously hungry. He wanted very much to eat the food, but he knew that this hunger could be another posthypnotic suggestion. It was possible, too, that a drug had been put in the food—a drug which would rob him of his will power again.

Neil particularly wanted to drink the coffee. Even as he felt himself drawn towards it he suspected that this was a posthypnotic suggestion and that the coffee contained the drug.

Neil decided to try just a few mouthfuls of the steak. It would give him strength, and it would be less likely than the coffee to have a drug in it. He cut it and found that it was juicy, tender, and cooked just as he liked it.

He ate the meat, ignoring the vegetables, tried a piece of bread, and then before he realised what he was doing, he picked up the coffee cup and brought it to his lips.

He tried to put the coffee cup down. It was a struggle. The smell of coffee was in his nostrils. Nevertheless he managed to put the cup back on the saucer. Once more he felt himself trembling.

He wolfed the steak now, tried the stuffed baked potato and found it delicious. While he ate, he tried to figure out a plan of escape.

The hole in the concrete through which the plate of food had been delivered was too small for him to get his shoulders through. He knew that there must be a hidden door in the cell, but he had not yet been able to find it.

Thinking about the door, he ate almost automatically until he suddenly realised that the tension he'd been feeling was gone.

He was horrified to find that he had been sipping coffee without being conscious of it. The mere act was what had relaxed him.

There was one thing which Dr. Lancaster in his posthypnotic suggestions had overlooked.

He ran to the bathroom and stuck his finger down his throat. He retched up most of what he had eaten.

Neil washed his hands. While he was drying them, he caught sight of his face in the mirror. It was not his own face. There was a haggard, drawn grimness about it, a wide-eyed stare that startled him.

Suddenly Neil felt the resistance ooze out of him. It was useless. He was fighting himself. Filled with a sense of depression, Neil left the bathroom. The tray was gone, the concrete slab was back in place.

Neil realised, however, that he had one temporary advantage. He had drunk the coffee but he had been able to get rid of most of it.

Dr. Lancaster would think that his patient had been drugged into mental receptivity again so he could readily be hypnotized, and Dr. Lancaster would probably come to the room.

Neil looked around for a possible weapon. He realised that he should have kept the knife that came with the steak. Of course if he had, they'd have noticed that it was missing when the tray came back. Even so, he would have had some weapon.

Neil walked slowly around the room, examining the wall for some sign of a door. There were tiny rectangular cracks in the concrete, marking the place where blocks had been fitted together, but he couldn't be sure that any of these outlined a door.

He made another fruitless search for something that could be used as a weapon. The towel rod in the bathroom was too fragile even if he could detach it from its supports in the wall. There was nothing else movable in the bathroom.

In the bedroom there were only the table the bed, and the chair, which was anchored to the floor. Perhaps he could pull a drawer out of the table and throw it at the doctor when he came into the room.

Neil tried the drawers in the table. They were locked shut.

He looked under the bed and found that the bed had no metal springs. The mattress rested on a web of ropes.

Completely discouraged, Neil lay down on the bed and stared up at the bare white ceiling. After a moment he saw a small trapdoor opening above his head. Dr. Lancaster's face appeared in the opening, his eyes staring down at the bed.

"You are tortured by conflict," came Dr. Lancaster's voice. "Sleep. Resolve your problems while you are at rest. You are drowsy. You are sinking into slumber."

Neil struggled to sit up, but before he could the man who had once before hypnotised him was able to do so again.

"Sleep," came the command, and once more Neil felt himself sinking into unconsciousness.

When he woke up, he knew that he had lost the battle.

The table with its desk lamp, the plain sheets of white paper, the pen were all waiting.

Neil fought with his subconscious urge while his body shook as though he had a chill. Perspiration oozed out on his skin.

Then, as though he had been drawn by some invisible magnet, he went to the table, picked up the pen, and wrote:

"I am Neil Anson. I am making this confession entirely of my own volition. It is my free and voluntary act. I murdered Frank Crenshaw. I also arranged for the robbery at the bank. After I had murdered Crenshaw I went to the side door, took out the keys and gave them to an accomplice who was waiting at the door. I had studied the habits of the guard and knew he would be down at the safe-deposit vault at that time."

TAKING a firmer hold on the pen, Neil continued, "My accomplice took the keys, unlocked the door of the counting room, put on a mask, and held up Durant. He opened the alley door and passed some two hundred thousand dollars out to me. I put the currency in my briefcase and walked away. Everything went as planned until Durant managed to kick the burglar alarm.

"My accomplice exchanged shots with the guard and was wounded in the right wrist.

"I am making this confession to ease my own conscience. I must have been crazy ever to have thought up such a scheme, but I hated Crenshaw and I needed money for my business."

Neil Anson signed the confession, and addressed an envelope: "Chief of Police, Pleasantville."

The strange part of it all was that Neil now felt more than half convinced that this was exactly what had happened.

He knew now that he had discharged the obligation of the posthypnotic suggestion and that while he had been hypnotised he had been told to sleep as soon as he had finished with the confession.

When Neil woke up he had no means of knowing how much later it was. He saw, though, that the paper on the table was blank. He had no way of knowing whether he had only dreamed about making a confession or had actually made one.

The door of his cell was now standing wide open. There seemed to be nothing to keep him from walking out.

He felt his jaw with the tips of his fingers and realised from the stubble that he had been in the cell for at least twenty-four hours, perhaps longer.

Neil walked to the door and looked out. The corridor, dimly lighted by electricity, led the length of what apparently was a cellar. There was a flight of stairs, then a door to the outside standing wide open. Looking through this door, Neil could see that it was night.

He went up the stairs and stopped to take stock of his personal possessions. He found to his surprise that everything he owned was back in its proper place.

His wrist-watch was on his wrist. His wallet, fountain pen, and automatic pencil were in his pocket. He found his handkerchief, his knife, and his small change in his trousers pocket.

Then his finger felt an unexpected bulk in the left-hand inside pocket of his coat. He pulled out a sheaf of bills.

In the dim light from the passageway he counted the money. It came to a thousand dollars.

For hours now, Neil had been concentrating only on escape. Now that the way of escape was open he felt a sudden impulse to stay and fight. As he stood in the doorway, deciding what to do next, he saw a figure outdoors running towards him.

Ellen Jasper's voice reached him. "Neil, oh, Neil."

She was running across the driveway. He could hear the crunch of gravel under her shoes. Then she was on the steps leading to the cellar door. The light shone on her anxious face.

"Ellen," he said, "what in the world are you doing here?"

"Are you all right, Neil?"

"Yes."

"You look—you look like a wild man."

"I've been through a lot."

"Are you coming with me, Neil? I can hide you, I can—"

"Wait a minute," Neil Anson said. "Come on back in here with me."

He took her arm and led her down the stairs, back into the dimly lighted passageway.

"What is it, Neil?" she asked, keeping her voice in a cautious whisper. "What do you want? What's the trouble?"

Neil said, "First I want to find a weapon; then I want to find a place where we can talk."

"Neil, tell me, what's the trouble?"

He found an unlocked door in the passageway which opened to a furnace room. Neil led her into the dark shadows. He groped around hoping to find a poker near the furnace.

At last his fingers closed upon a round iron bar. He straightened up. "How did you happen to find me here?" he asked.

"I had to take the lie-detector test," Ellen explained. "I decided to have my hair done while I was waiting and I was under the drier when you walked out. I saw you hail the taxi."

"Did Gladys Leland see me, or know that you saw me?"

"No. I don't think so. I didn't say anything to anyone?"

"But how did you find me here?"

"I got hold of the taxi driver. He didn't have any idea who you were, of course. He told me he'd taken you here, that you'd told him to wait, but after a while a nurse had come out and told him you'd be longer than you'd expected and that he was to leave. She paid him off."

"Go ahead," Neil said.

She said, "I kept wondering and—Neil, I don't know. I think George Durant is a complete phony. I knew he had called Dr. Lancaster two or three times from the bank. I knew he had done work for Dr. Lancaster, getting him located here. I was sure you couldn't be in any kind of business relationship with Durant and to-night I got nervous. I made up my mind I'd come here and look the place over. I thought of going in the front door and asking Dr. Lancaster about you."

"But you didn't."

"No. When I came here, there was something about the place that frightened me. It was dark and—and sort of sinister. I started walking along the grass by the driveway and I saw that open door and the faint light in the passageway. I was wondering whether I dared to go in and look around and—and there you were! Tell me, Neil, what happened?"

Neil said, "Dr. Lancaster is a hypnotist. He's probably a darned good one. He uses drugs to help rob you of the ability to struggle against the hypnotic influence and he uses posthypnotic suggestion."

"But why, Neil? What's it all about?"

"That's what I want to find out," Neil said. "He used a posthypnotic suggestion to force me to write a confession."

"A confession!"

"Yes."

There was dismay in her voice. "Oh, Neil! I would have sworn that you—oh, you couldn't!"

"I'm afraid," Neil said, "that it's impossible to explain what happened. I don't think anyone would believe me."

"I'll believe you."

And, standing there in the furnace room, his voice hardly more than a whisper, Neil told her what had happened.

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THE CORPSE WAS IN THE COUNTING HOUSE

"What was the drug he used?" she asked.

"I don't know," Neil said. "It's probably one of the barbiturates."

"Could a drug do that, even if a man were fighting against a hypnotic influence?" Ellen asked.

"I fought against it," Neil said. "Of course, I didn't know exactly what was going to happen until after the drug had been given to me. We must remember that most of the people who come to Dr. Lancaster do so because they want to be hypnotised."

"Didn't you know what was coming?"

"No, I didn't," Neil said. "I knew we were in a jam. We had to do something and I thought Dr. Lancaster might be the key to the solution. I thought I'd find out. Well, I walked into a trap, that's all."

"Couldn't you have got up and walked out after you were drugged?"

Neil explained: "Sure, but I didn't realise what had happened until the drug began to take effect. After all, Ellen, you know the barbiturates are classified as hypnotics. They use sodium amytal and sodium pentothal as truth serums. Dr. Lancaster doesn't use the hypnotism itself except as a basis for a posthypnotic suggestion. After the suggestion is planted in someone's subconscious mind, he is at war with himself until he obeys the subconscious urge.

"But never mind that for a moment. Tell me about you, Ellen. What happened when they gave you the polygraph test?"

"I fluffed it," she said.

"How?"

"They asked me if I—oh, it's a mess, Neil."

"Go on," he ordered. "Tell me about it."

"Well, they asked me if I had any guilty knowledge of the murder or if I had helped to conceal any information from the police, and questions like that."

"And what happened?"

She said, "I kept thinking of you and how you'd been to my apartment, and I'd kept that information from the police. It turned out later that they knew that, anyway. I don't know how they knew it."

"They were tracing your calls. Go on. What happened?"

"Well, they knew I was lying. That is, they said the lie detector showed I was lying on some of the questions. I got terribly excited and nervous, and I guess I didn't make a good test. They say I have to take another to-morrow after my nerves have quieted down."

Neil said, "That's Harman's idea. He thinks that—well, he feels that if I'm innocent then you must be guilty."

"Of what?"

"Crenshaw's murder."

"But why?" she asked with dismay.

"Because there wasn't time for anyone else to have gone into the private office, kill Crenshaw, and then leave before—"

"I'm beginning to think so, too," she interrupted hastily. "Neil, do you suppose that I could have been drugged; that someone could have managed to hypnotise me and plant one of these subconscious impulses so that I would have done anything like that?"

"I don't think so."

"That's what you say, but you don't sound entirely convinced."

"No, no," he protested, "I'm sure that—"

"But why, Neil, if a posthypnotic suggestion could make you sign a confession to something you didn't do, why couldn't it be used to make me do something I didn't want to do?"

"Nothing like committing a murder," he said, uneasily. "Besides, you didn't even know Dr. Lancaster, did you?"

"I'd seen him once or twice."

"Where?"

"He'd been in the office."

"Doing what?"

"Talking with Mr. Crenshaw. He was arranging some loans."

"He didn't want any loans," Neil said. "He wanted a chance to get into the bank. Ellen, did he ever—" He broke off as they heard the sound of steps.

Through the partly open door they could look out into the corridor. A shadow showed in the hallway. Then the nurse in the starched uniform walked quietly past the door and down the corridor.

"Going down to my cell," Neil whispered. "They want to make sure that I've left."

They stood silent in the furnace room, Neil tensed for action, Ellen with her hand resting lightly on his arm.

After a few moments the nurse came back down the dimly lighted corridor. Then, after she had passed, they heard the slam of the outer door, the shooting of bolts.

A man's voice called a question from somewhere above.

"He's gone," the nurse answered.

Neil felt a surge of excitement.

ELLEN asked, "Why didn't they turn you over to the police?"

"I think," Neil said, "that they want me to escape. They want me to leave the country. They gave me money so I could. They're undoubtedly mailing that confession to the police. Anything I might say after that would seem like a lie to explain away the written confession."

"Neil, what are you going to do now?"

"Look around. We might even manage to get that confession back."

Holding the iron poker, he moved cautiously out into the corridor, turned towards the outer door, which was now locked and barred with heavy bolts on the inside, and climbed another flight of stairs leading to the first floor of the house.

There was a door at the top of the stairs. Neil tried the knob. It was unlocked.

Ellen dug her fingers into his arm. "I hear a car coming," she whispered.

They waited, tense and silent. They could hear tyres crunching on the gravel. Then there was the sound of a jangling bell.

Low-voiced conversation was audible on the other side of the door, then steps in the corridor. After that, the house seemed completely silent.

Neil gently turned the knob, pushed the door open, and stepped into the same reception room which he had seen earlier in the day. There was no sign of the nurse, no sign of Dr. Lancaster. The big house was wrapped in gloomy silence.

After a few minutes, Neil beckoned to Ellen and led the way on down the corridor. A door was slightly ajar and Neil, holding the poker ready, pushed the door open a few inches on a room some eight feet square. The only furniture was one chair.

Abruptly, a door opened somewhere behind them, and Neil pulled Ellen into a little square cubicle and quietly closed the door.

He saw then that the chair faced a window into another room, and through it they could see Dr. Lancaster standing over a man who was relaxed in a deep chair.

But neither Dr. Lancaster nor the man in the chair seemed to see them.

"One of those trick mirrors," Neil whispered. "It's a window from this side, a mirror from that side."

The door of the other room opened. The white-uniformed nurse stepped in and said to Dr. Lancaster, "G.D. 62 is on the telephone and—"

"I can't talk to him now," Dr. Lancaster said.

The sound of voices came through the room as though they were being heard from a radio loud-speaker.

"Microphone," Neil explained. "We can see and hear everything that goes on, but they can't see us or hear us."

"Tell him to call back in twenty minutes," Dr. Lancaster said, without taking his eyes from the man who was sprawled in the chair.

The nurse went out.

The patient looked up at the doctor expectantly.

"As I understand it," Dr. Lancaster said, "you have been instructed to take security screening tests in order to get a job in a nuclear fission plant?"

"That's right."

"Have you had previous experience with the lie detector?"

"Yes."

"What happened?"

"It trapped me."

The nurse returned with a hypodermic. Dr. Lancaster helped the man take off his coat and gave him the injection. Then he drew up a chair, sat down, and watched the man's eyes.

After a few minutes, Dr. Lancaster began talking in a reassuring voice.

"When I have finished with you," he said, "you will have complete control of your anxiety about your connections with any foreign government or any Communist leanings. Do you understand?"

The man nodded.

"If there are any other subjects on which you wish to be made immune from detection, you must tell me. Otherwise they will trap you. How about personal honesty? Have you ever stolen money?"

"No. Never. What the heck are you insinuating?"

"Don't get upset about it," Dr. Lancaster said. "You must relax, and put yourself in my power. I had to know about your past. You must have complete confidence in me, and you must co-operate with me. You want to put your mind under the complete control of my mind for the one specific purpose of keeping you from any inadvertent self-betrayal on this one matter. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"Look me in the eyes then. Hold your eyes on mine. Concentrate on sleep. You will lose all of your cares and worries."

"Your eyelids are beginning to droop," Dr. Lancaster went on. "You feel an overwhelming desire to withdraw from the cares of the waking world. You are drifting into unconsciousness. You are sound asleep."

There was a moment's silence; then, with complete assurance, Dr. Lancaster went on, "You are now completely subject to my suggestion. You will do exactly as I say.

"First, you will remember that no one will be able to hypnotise you except me. From now on, if anyone tries to hypnotise you, he will fail."

Dr. Lancaster waited for that to sink in. Then he went on, "There's no need for you to have any fear that the lie detector will at any time in the future be able to discover your affiliation with the Communist party or any allegiance to any foreign government.

"The lie detector will register no physical signs of anxiety because you will have complete subconscious assurance. There will be no increase in blood-pressure, no change in respiration, no change in the resistance of the skin. You will be immune.

"You will know unconsciously that you are immune from discovery and that will give you complete tranquillity when questions are asked you on this subject.

"Now you will sleep for fifteen minutes. After you wake up, you will remember that under no circumstances will anyone else be able to hypnotise you. However, I can hypnotise you at will."

Dr. Lancaster abruptly turned and strode from the room.

Too late, Neil realised what was going to happen next.

He pushed past Ellen to start for the door.

"What's the matter?" she asked.

"He'll come in here to watch him when he wakes up," Neil said, and reached for the knob of the door.

It was too late. The door opened and Dr. Lancaster started in, saw Neil, and stopped in surprise. Neil went for him.

"Janet!" Dr. Lancaster called sharply, jumping back and fumbling inside his white smock.

Neil lunged forward and rammed the end of the poker into the doctor's stomach. Out of the corner of his eye, Neil saw the nurse coming down the corridor. She had a small automatic in her hand.

"Stop!" she said. "Put up your hands!"

Neil estimated the range. It was a good thirty feet.

Dr. Lancaster was drawing a .45 automatic. Neil made a pass at it with the poker.

The nurse fired.

Neil heard the bullet whiz past his head. Dr. Lancaster stepped nimbly backwards so as to avoid Neil's poker.

Neil lunged, slashed with the poker, and caught the end of Dr. Lancaster's weapon, spoiling his aim. Neil's ears rang with the roar of the explosion. A second later there was a crash of glass as a mirror or window tinkled into fragments.

He saw Ellen running wildly towards the nurse and saw the nurse point her gun straight at Ellen.

"Stop!" the nurse said, spitting out the word.

"Stop, Ellen!" Neil shouted, and he made another swipe at Dr. Lancaster. Just as the doctor fired for the second time, Neil jerked his arm with the crook of the poker and Lancaster dropped the gun.

Neil dropped the poker and dived for it.

Dr. Lancaster kicked at his head. His foot struck Neil a grazing blow on the temple, jarring him. He grabbed for the doctor's foot, caught it and jerked. The doctor came down on top of Neil. Neil, groping with his fingers, found the gun.

He was conscious of two sharp explosions over his head, then he flung Dr. Lancaster off and got to his knees. Ellen Jasper was lying face down on the floor.

The nurse was pointing her gun at Neil.

Cold with rage, Neil pulled the trigger on the doctor's automatic without aiming. The nurse fired. Her bullet hit the floor and ripped up a long splintered trail of white wood beneath the waxed finish.

Dr. Lancaster grabbed Neil's gun arm. Neil slashed out with his left, his fist catching Dr. Lancaster in the mouth.

The nurse turned and started to run.

Neil, on his knees, caught Dr. Lancaster on the jaw with his fist. Then he was running to Ellen Jasper.

"Ellen," he said, "Ellen, are you hurt?" She was struggling to her hands and knees. "Ellen, what happened?" he asked. "Did she hit you?"

"No, I ducked in time. Oh, Neil, are you hurt?"

"No, I'm all right. We've got to get out of here. We—"

"There he goes," she shouted.

Neil turned. Dr. Lancaster was sprinting for a door.

"Stop!" Neil shouted.

THE door was a swinging door. Dr. Lancaster hit it like a football player plunging into the line. The door slammed open and swung shut.

"Well," Neil said, "there we are. Maybe it's just as well he got away. He's hypnotised me twice, and he might be able to do it again. I don't know."

"Let's get out of here, Neil," Ellen said. "Somebody must have heard all that shooting, and—"

"I know," he said. "Listen Ellen, you're going to have to do something for me."

"Anything, Neil."

"Get to the nearest telephone, call the FBI and tell them what's happened here."

"How about the police?"

"Stay away from them."

"Why?"

Neil said, "Dr. Lancaster knows who I am. He got that written confession out of me. He'll send it to the police."

"Well," she said, "can't you tell them how it was made? Can't you—?"

"They won't believe me," Neil said. "They'll think I'm just trying to repudiate my confession. I doubt if Dr. Lancaster recognised you, and I doubt that he'd dare make any complaint to the police."

"Neil, what are you going to do?"

He said, "I'm going to try to work this thing out to a solution."

"Neil, can't you go to the police?"

"Not yet. The way things shape up right now, if I'm innocent of the murder, then you must be guilty. Besides, pretty soon they'll have my written confession. I can't afford to get caught now."

"But if George Durant was mixed up in this thing and—?"

"How are we going to prove he was mixed up in it?"

"He called Dr. Lancaster and sent Nathan Edwards out to see him."

"Suppose he says he didn't?"

"But you heard him!"

He smiled at her and said, "That's just it. Don't you see, Ellen? We need something besides my word. Now if you can get the FBI on the job, investigating this business of using hypnotism to beat security tests, then they may be able to get a confession out of Dr. Lancaster. Come on, let's go."

"Neil, where are you going? Can't I stay with you?"

"That would be the most dangerous spot on earth."

"Well, where are you going?"

Neil grinned. "I'm going to call on a woman. I've just remembered where I've heard her voice before."

Sirens were screaming before Neil Anson was three blocks from Lancaster's house. He knew then that Lancaster had called the police. Probably he'd told them that Neil had robbed him.

Dr. Lancaster had been clever. He had wanted Neil Anson out of the country. He had even planted escape money on him. The signed confession, plus Neil's flight, would outweigh any evidence Neil tried to give against Lancaster.

And, Neil realised, Dr. Lancaster had probably taken the numbers on the big bills that were in his pocket and would be able to give a list of those numbers to the police. But since Neil knew that he might need every cent of cash he could put his hands on, he decided to take a chance and keep the money.

Two police cars passed Neil as he walked along; and it took all his self-control not to run. But he kept plodding along; and fifteen minutes later he was at the Redfield Apartments.

Neil got the lower door of the apartment house open by ringing the bells of two top-floor apartments. The buzzer opened the outer door. He climbed the stairs to the third floor and tiptoed down to apartment 321.

He pressed the buzzer button on the side of the door.

There was no answer.

Neil tried the door. It was unlocked. Neil turned the doorknob and stepped into the dark apartment. He stood on the threshold a moment, then switched on the lights. The apartment was in confusion. Someone had been searching ahead of him.

A drawer had been pulled out of the desk, and papers lay scattered over the floor. The top of the desk was pulled down. The contents of the pigeonholes were strewn about. The bottom two drawers of the desk, however, were closed.

Neil walked across the room and opened the bottom drawer. It was filled with papers, newspaper clippings, envelopes tied together, cancelled cheques, receipted bills—all in perfect order.

He opened the drawer above. It, too, was filled with papers, and was in perfect order, contrasting with the wild disorder of the other drawer and the top of the desk.

Either whoever had been searching the desk had found what he wanted in the top drawer and therefore had no need to search further, or Neil's visit had interrupted someone. The lights in the apartment had been off, but whoever had been at the desk could have been using a flashlight.

Neil stood for a moment, his back to the door, watching the reflection on the opposite wall. Behind him the mirror showed the bathroom door gently opening.

Neil whirled and jumped towards the door.

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The door swung open so abruptly that it slammed hard against a doorstop. For a moment the figure that rushed toward Neil struck him with horror. It was a masculine figure with a gaunt, grey face—a demoniac face filled with menace. As Neil lunged he realised that this face was a plastic mask, completely covering the man's features.

Neil's punch jarred the man back on his heels. For a moment the man staggered, then he lunged forward once more, swinging the blackjack viciously.

Neil tried to block the blow, but the blackjack came down on his left forearm, and for a moment the pain paralysed him.

Then Neil lashed out with his right. Once more he caught the man, this time on the right side of the head. The man staggered back.

A key turned in the door.

The masked man ran swiftly to the kitchen door, pushed it open and vanished.

The hall door opened and Katherine Gloster stood in the doorway, transfixed with surprise, her door key still in her gloved hand.

She dropped the key, opened her purse, and took out a small revolver.

"All right," she said. "Get them up!"

"Don't be a fool," Neil said. "He went out through the kitchen."

"Who are you trying to kid?"

"No one."

She thrust out her foot, kicked the door closed behind her and said, "Open the kitchen door. Don't make any sudden moves."

Neil walked ahead of her and pushed open the kitchen door with his right hand. The kitchen was dark, but the back door had been left open.

"Turn on the light," she commanded.

Neil found the light switch and clicked on the lights.

He started towards the back door.

"No you don't," she snapped. "Stay right here."

She went quickly to the rear door and looked down the back stairs. Then she closed and locked the kitchen door. She faced Neil. "Start talking."

Neil said, "I came here. You weren't home. I got in."

"How?"

"The door was unlocked."

"Then what?"

"I found it just like this," he said. "I turned on the lights. It was dark when I came in. I noticed that the desk and the upper drawer had been ransacked. The other two drawers seemed to be in order. I thought that might mean either that the person who was searching had found what he wanted, or that he had been interrupted."

"And so?"

"I looked around the room. As I turned my back on the bathroom door, I saw, in the mirror, that it was opening. I turned around just as a man jumped out with a blackjack. He took a couple of swipes at me and I hit him a couple of times. Then your key made a noise in the door and he went out fast."

"A nice story," she said sarcastically. "If I believed it. All you had to do was come in here, unlock the back door to the service porch, leave it open so you'd have a good alibi, and start searching."

"For what?"

"For whatever you wanted to find when you came here in the first place."

He had no answer to that.

She said, "According to all the authorities on the subject, you're supposed to put your hands up when I point this gun at you. You won't do it. I haven't the nerve to shoot you just because you won't do it. But if you try to rush me, I will shoot you. Now I'm going to telephone the police. You're wanted for murder and I'm going to let them come here and take you. Don't move or I'll pull the trigger."

She crossed the room to the telephone.

"Wait a minute," Neil said. "I can prove I'm telling the truth."

"How?" she asked.

"You can see where that blackjack hit me on the left arm. I'm just getting so I can move it."

He slipped the coat off his right shoulder, then held his left arm straight down, wiggled his shoulders, and let the coat slide to the floor. With his right hand he unfastened his cuff and pulled up his sleeve.

On his left forearm, the mark of the blackjack could be seen plainly.

She studied the arm for a moment, then said, "What did you want?"

"I wanted to find out why you were interested in George Durant."

"Find anything?"

"I just got here."

"And you didn't do any searching?"

"No. I saw the top drawer was in a mess and the others weren't, that's all."

"And you weren't looking for any specific thing?" she asked sceptically.

Neil smiled and shook his head. "I think it's time we understood each other a little better," he said. "What's your connection with Alva Kenton?"

She said, "I'm not free to talk."

"I'm free to talk," Neil said. "You're certainly free to listen. When Alva Kenton was giving the lie-detector test, I heard you whispering with him about George Durant."

She couldn't keep the surprise from showing on her face.

"So," Neil said, "I thought we might just as well pool our information. If you're interested in how Durant beats the lie-detector, I think I can tell you."

"What—what do you know about all this? Who's been talking to you?"

"The point is," Neil said, "do you want my information or don't you?"

"All right," she said after a moment. "I want your information."

"If you want my information you'd better start talking," Neil told her. "Then I'll tell you what I know."

"All right," she said. "This is the second bank hold-up that George Durant has been mixed up in. The interesting thing, so far as we're concerned, is that it didn't show up on his lie-detector test. When he was being screened here, he said he had never worked for any other bank and had never been discharged. Both of those answers were lies, but the polygraph didn't give any indication that they were. Well, you can see how important that is."

"What's your connection with all this?" Neil asked.

"You probably won't believe it, after the way I've bungled, but I work for a detective agency. Alva Kenton hired me to try to find out how George Durant was beating the lie detector."

"Were you getting anywhere?"

Katherine shook her head. "Not really. Just a hint here and there."

"And you think he had something to do with this last hold-up?"

KATHERINE replied, "I'm sure of it. It was so much like the other one he was involved in. That's why I was willing to give you the breaks right from the first. Only this hold-up is harder to figure out. He must have had an accomplice to truss him up. That accomplice must have been wounded, probably in the hand or wrist, but no one has gone to a doctor with a gunshot wound—so far as we know."

Neil said, "All right. I'll tell you what I know. Durant beats the lie detector by hypnotism."

"You couldn't take a test if you were hypnotised," she said positively. "You wouldn't get any reaction, and the machine would show that. We've experimented with hypnotism. It won't help any. You're on the wrong track."

Neil said positively, "This is different. This is posthypnotic suggestion. A man gives no guilty reaction on the one thing he really wants to cover up. Aside from that one thing, he reacts normally."

She thought for a moment, then shook her head. "I don't believe it would work."

"I do."

She said, "You can't hypnotise more than a certain percentage of the people, and even then you can't—"

"Forget it," Neil interrupted. "I know something about hypnotism. So far as textbooks are concerned, hypnotism is right where it was a generation ago. People think there haven't been any discoveries, any changes. They're wrong. Use the new drugs in connection with hypnotism and use continuing posthypnotic suggestions and you get answers that aren't in any textbook."

"How do you know?"

"I was hypnotised by Dr. Lancaster and made to confess that I'd murdered Frank Crenshaw and held up the bank."

"But you didn't do it!"

"Of course not," Neil said, "but I confessed to it just the same."

"You mean Lancaster forced you against your will to write a confession?"

"It amounted to that."

"I don't believe it."

Neil said, "If you're working for Alva Kenton, call him up. He probably knows about the confession by this time."

She looked at him with worried eyes. "I wouldn't listen to you for a minute," she said, "if it weren't that what you've told me about Lancaster is just about the only possible explanation of what's happened, crazy as it may sound." She picked up a pencil and started doodling aimlessly.

Neil said, "I can tell you what I've been able to figure out. That's the best I can do."

"Go ahead."

Neil said, "I know I didn't kill Frank Crenshaw. So I know that much more than the police do and I can work from there."

"Go on."

"Ellen Jasper was a little late for work the morning of the murder. The man who killed Crenshaw could hardly have counted on that. He had to be where he could kill Crenshaw and he had to have a good idea of how he was going to get out without being seen after he had done it. It would have been impossible for anyone to have gone into Crenshaw's office, killed him, and gone out. So someone must have been waiting in Crenshaw's office."

"How did he think he could get out without being seen?"

"The way he did get out without being seen."

"And how was that?"

"Don't you see? He must have known the burglar alarm was going to sound, that there was to be shooting, and that in the confusion he could slip out."

Katherine continued her drawing absent-mindedly. The silence grew awkward.

"Now then," Neil went on, "if my theory is right, and I think it has to be right, George Durant had two accomplices. One of them was the bank guard who so conveniently said he had left the keys in the side door, and actually did for a few minutes, but later on transferred them to the door of the counting room.

"And the other accomplice?"

"The man who murdered Frank Crenshaw."

"Could both accomplices have been one man?"

"I don't think so," Neil said. "When the bank opened, the murderer must have already been in Frank Crenshaw's office. He must have been hiding in the coat closet, waiting for Crenshaw to come in. Then, when the burglar alarm sounded and the shooting started, he could walk out while everyone was down on the floor. Don't you see? It had to be an inside job all the way through."

"I guess you're right," she admitted.

"Now then, you add my briefcase to the picture. It was found in the railroad station—one place where it would be certain to be found. If I tried to get rid of it, that's the last place I'd have left it."

She nodded in agreement.

"All right," Neil said, "what do we do?"

She put down the pencil. "Will you trust me?"

"Why should I?"

"What have you to lose?" she asked.

"Everything, if I'm arrested before I can prove my theory."

She shook her head. "You've signed that confession. You've got to get some facts to support all this theory and you're going to have to get them now. There's one thing I don't understand."

"What?"

"Once Dr. Lancaster had you hypnotised, he could have told you to forget everything that happened while——"

"I know," Neil said. "The point is, he didn't want to?"

"Why not?"

"I had left a trail to his place. Sooner or later the taxi-driver would see my picture and remember having taken me to Lancaster's place."

"And so?"

Neil took out the thousand dollars and put it on the table.

"So," he said, "he is going to claim that I went out there to rob him. He's probably already reported to the police that someone has stolen a thousand dollars, and has given them the serial numbers of the bills."

SHE said quietly, "You're going to have to trust me."

She walked over to the telephone, gave a number, and then said, "Hello, Mr. Kenton? This is Miss Gloster. I have news for you."

She was silent for a moment. Then she said, "I think I know what happened. I think I know how——"

She was interrupted by the voice on the other end of the telephone.

After almost a minute she said, "Tell me all the details."

She listened for nearly another minute; then she said, "Hold on, will you?"

She put her hand over the receiver and turned to Neil. "Lancaster reported to the police that he'd been held up by a man and a woman. They robbed him, and the man said he needed getaway money."

"Go ahead," Neil said.

"The police went out there as soon as the alarm was turned in. They found evidence to support Lancaster's story. They started searching the neighborhood and picked up Ellen Jasper a few blocks from the place. Lancaster identified her as the woman in the hold-up. Then he identified you from police photographs."

Neil said quickly, "Where is Ellen now?"

"At police headquarters."

"That makes a great deal of difference," he said. "We're going to police headquarters."

"I thought you'd see it that way," she said. She turned back to the telephone. "I'll be at police headquarters in a few minutes. Neil Anson will be with me."

The big room at headquarters was well filled. Dr. Lancaster was there, looking smug, with the nurse, Janet Balden.

Ellen Jasper, her eyes wide with apprehension, sat silent. She watched Neil's face anxiously.

Police Captain Harry Macon, a quiet, patient man, said, "All right, Lieutenant Sheridan, we've heard Lancaster's and the nurse's story. Let them keep quiet for a while. Now, Anson, what do you have to say for yourself? Remember, if you want to say anything it's a voluntary statement and it can be used against you. We aren't making any promises, and we aren't making any threats. You understand all that?"

"Yes."

"All right, go ahead."

Neil said, "I didn't kill Frank Crenshaw. He was alive when I left the bank."

"Then why did you run away?"

"Because if I'd surrendered, the police would have started working up a case against me. I wanted to try and find out who murdered Frank Crenshaw."

"Did you?"

"I found some clues."

"What are they?"

"When I left the bank," Neil said, "I left my briefcase in Crenshaw's office. When the police got there, it was gone. To my mind that's proof that someone was in the room and left, taking my briefcase."

"To your mind," Captain Macon said.

Dr. Lancaster smiled. "Of course," he said, "as I understand the case, the briefcase was used to transport the murder gun and some two hundred thousand dollars in currency. He'd naturally——"

"I'm sorry, Doctor," Captain Macon interrupted. "You've told your story. I'm giving Anson a chance to tell his."

His glance at Dr. Lancaster implied he was just giving Neil rope to hang himself.

"I'm sorry," Dr. Lancaster said.

"Go on, Anson," Captain Macon said. "You were talking about your briefcase."

"I had that briefcase with me when I went into Crenshaw's office," Anson said. "It was full of papers. I didn't have it with me when I left."

"How did you happen to leave the briefcase?" Captain Macon asked.

"I forgot it. The point I'm making," Neil said desperately, "is that I can prove I didn't have the briefcase when I left the bank."

"You have a witness who will testify to that?" Macon asked.

"Carl Harman, the bank's lawyer," Sheridan said. "I've asked him to be here."

"All right," Captain Macon said. "Suppose Harman's testimony does bear you out, Anson. What does it prove?"

"It shows that someone was in the room with Crenshaw after I left."

"Not necessarily."

There was a knock on the door. Lieutenant Sheridan opened it to admit Carl Harman.

"Come right in, Mr. Harman. We've been expecting you."

Harman said, "I understood you were going to have—well, well, I see you have. Good evening, Anson."

"Come in and sit down," Lieutenant Sheridan said. "Anson mentioned that you could substantiate his claim that he left the bank without his briefcase."

"Absolutely," Harman said. "I've told you that several times. I'll go a step further. I had thought that since he didn't have the briefcase with him, Ellen Jasper might either have committed the murder or been an accomplice."

Harman looked around with a smile and then went on, "But I am glad to say that while her record on the polygraph is not entirely satisfactory, and she eventually became too upset emotionally to continue with the test, I am now satisfied that she is innocent."

Captain Macon shook his head. "This lie-detector business doesn't impress me."

Lieutenant Sheridan turned to Neil, "Have you got a cigarette, Anson?"

Neil handed his cigarette-case to him. The lieutenant opened it. There were three cigarettes in it.

"This your brand, Anson?"

"Yes, I always smoke them."

"How long since you filled this case?"

"It must have been—gosh, two days, I guess."

"Then you aren't a heavy smoker?"

"No, three or four a day."

Lieutenant Sheridan looked at the cigarette-case thoughtfully.

"When your briefcase was found," he said after a moment, "there were grains of cigarette tobacco in the bottom, some of them charred, and bits of charred paper." He handed the cigarette-case back to Neil.

"He's lying about his smoking," Dr. Lancaster volunteered.

Lieutenant Sheridan looked at him, nodded, and said, "Thank you for the helpful suggestion, Doctor." His tone wiped the smirk from Dr. Lancaster's face.

"I think we know pretty much what happened, Captain Macon," Lieutenant Sheridan said. "But Ellen Jasper couldn't be called an impartial witness any more. It seems she was engaged to Neil Anson's brother. That engagement was broken off because she——"

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Ellen interrupted: "Because of personal reasons. Please leave me out of it."

"You've put yourself in it," Captain Macon said. "Go ahead, Lieutenant."

"So," Lieutenant Sheridan went on, "though she isn't an impartial witness, if you analyse her statement, it's the strongest evidence there is against Neil Anson. She didn't see anyone go into the room and she didn't see anyone except Anson go out of the room. But there are other things that make it look as though he didn't do it."

"What are they?"

"In Crenshaw's wastebasket we found a couple of dozen burnt matches. Crenshaw smoked cigars, but there were no cigar butts in the ash tray. The cleaning women said that the ash trays had all been cleaned up the evening before."

"That's right," Harman said. "I came in and put some papers on Mr. Crenshaw's desk. The cleaning women were just leaving. I spoke to them and then spread the papers out so that Mr. Crenshaw would have them first thing in the morning."

"Where were those papers?" Captain Macon asked.

"Right there on his desk. They were lying there, spattered with blood, when Mr. Crenshaw's body was found."

Captain Macon looked at Lieutenant Sheridan, who nodded slightly.

"Can't you understand?" Neil said. "It wouldn't have been impossible for someone who had been hiding in Crenshaw's office to escape while the bank employees were lying flat on the floor."

"And then what happened to him?" Captain Macon asked.

"We've thought about that," Lieutenant Sheridan said, catching Captain Macon's eye. "We're interested in that theory because of the evidence of the tabacco."

"Go on," Captain Macon said.

"In the wastebasket we also found a whole lot of papers concerned with the Anson Brothers' Manufacturing Company—papers that Anson might have been planning to show to Crenshaw. How did those papers get into Crenshaw's office?"

Harman said, "I think perhaps I can help you there, Lieutenant."

"Go right ahead, Mr. Harman."

"Of course," Harman said, "I'll tell you frankly that I'm rather on the side of the defence here. I think Anson and Miss Jasper are both innocent, but that's as far as I can go. I can't help you after that."

Dr. Lancaster stirred uneasily and started to say something, but Captain Macon motioned him to be silent.

"Go ahead, Mr. Harman," Lieutenant Sheridan said.

"So far as the papers are concerned," Harman said, "I know something about that. Anson had been borrowing money from Mr. Crenshaw. Mr. Crenshaw decided to call his loans. There was a clause in the contract that permitted it."

"And Neil Anson brought the papers to his office to try to get Crenshaw to change his mind?"

Captain Macon said, "Maybe that gives us another motive for the murder. Maybe Anson handed the papers to Crenshaw. Instead of looking at them, Crenshaw simply threw them in the wastebasket. Anson got worked up and a fight started. Personally, I think Anson killed him. I think he may have killed him in self-defence. I think he probably hit Crenshaw and Crenshaw pulled a gun out of his drawer. How about it, Anson?"

Neil Anson said, "I didn't kill Crenshaw."

"If it was self-defence," Captain Macon said, "now's the time to say so."

Lieutenant Sheridan said, "Captain, we took those crumpled papers out of the wastebasket, and after we had got Anson's briefcase we put the papers back in. They filled it tight."

Dr. Lancaster could contain himself no longer. He said, "That's why Anson threw the papers into the wastebasket—so he'd have room for the gun in the briefcase."

Lieutenant Sheridan turned to him and asked, "Then how did Neil Anson carry the gun into the bank?"

"In his hip-pocket, probably."

"Yes, we thought of that," Lieutenant Sheridan said. "We examined the gun microscopically. There were bits of red-leather fibres sticking to the sharp surfaces. They'd evidently been scraped off the inside of the briefcase while the gun was in it. You had to look with a microscope to find them. But they were red. The inside of Anson's briefcase is brown."

"But you found the gun in the briefcase, didn't you?" Dr. Lancaster said. "That certainly is proof enough—"

Lieutenant Sheridan said, "Too much proof. The charred tobacco and paper in the briefcase make it look as though someone had been chain-smoking, and had dumped an ash tray in the briefcase to carry the mess out of the bank."

Neil Anson said, "I insist that someone must have been in that office. The reason I'm so positive is that I understand Crenshaw's hat was on the shelf, and his overcoat was hanging in the coat closet."

"Quite obviously," Harman said, "that contradicts your own theory, Anson. If the murderer had been waiting in the closet, Crenshaw would have seen him as soon as he opened the closet door and would have dropped the things on the floor, and—"

Anson said, "That's what the murderer was counting on. After he killed Crenshaw, he hung up his coat and put his hat on the shelf. If the police had found the coat and hat lying on the floor, they'd have realised that someone had startled Crenshaw into dropping them."

"Well," Harman said, "you were there when he came in. You ought to know what he did with his coat and hat."

"He dropped them on a chair."

"And didn't go to the closet?"

"No."

Captain Macon nodded, "I want to ask you one question, Anson. Did you have trouble with Crenshaw that morning?"

"All right," Neil said, "I'll tell you. He shoved me and I hit him. We swapped a couple of punches. He jerked open the drawer of his desk to reach for a gun. I stepped out into the other room and pulled the door shut. I thought he was going to follow me. But he didn't. The murderer must have stepped out of the closet just then and shot him, then hung up the coat and waited—"

"Just a moment," Captain Macon interrupted, "You admit that you had trouble, that you hit Crenshaw?"

"Yes."

"And Crenshaw opened the drawer of the desk to get a gun?"

"Yes."

Dr. Lancaster smiled triumphantly.

Anson sighed. "All right, go ahead. Charge me with murder."

"Just a minute," Lieutenant Sheridan said. "I want to ask Mr. Harman a couple of questions. I believe you said you were coming down Fifth Street just as the burglar alarm started to sound."

"That's right," Harman said.

"And you ran to the side door and tried to get in?"

"That's right."

"Why didn't you try the knob? The door was unlocked."

"It never occurred to me. I thought, of course, the door would be locked."

"Well," Lieutenant Sheridan said, "it's a very interesting case. The way I see it, it has to be one person or the other."

"What do you mean?" Harman asked.

"Either Mr. Neil Anson or you," Lieutenant Sheridan said.

"Has to be what?" Harman asked.

"The murderer of Frank Crenshaw."

"Me!" Harman exclaimed. "Are you crazy?"

"I never heard such idiotic drivel in my life!" Dr. Lancaster said. "I tell you Neil Anson is a dangerous criminal. He and that girl held me up and robbed me of a thousand dollars. You have the numbers—"

"That's another matter," Lieutenant Sheridan said. "We're talking about the murder now."

LIEUTENANT Sheridan turned his back on Dr. Lancaster and said to Captain Macon, "You see, sir, Harman is a chain-smoker. The gun was found in Neil Anson's briefcase, but we see no reason why he should have dumped the papers out of his briefcase to carry the gun out after having carried it in in some other way.

"And that pile of matches in the wastebasket makes it look as though someone might have spent the night in Crenshaw's private office, waiting for him to come in in the morning. The coat closet isn't much of a hiding place but a man could crouch there for a few minutes.

"There's no question but what Harman was in the room the night before. The cleaning women went out and left him there putting papers on Crenshaw's desk. It would have been easy for him to have closed the door and stayed there all night. Harman says that he came down the street, ran to the side door of the bank, and tried to get in."

Lieutenant Sheridan paused as if for effect and then went on. "But we have a witness who saw him slip out of the side door of the bank, then turn and start pounding on the door. So I thought perhaps we'd get him up here with his briefcase and take a look at the inside of it.

"If it's lined with red leather and if a microscopic examination of the fibres show it's the same kind of leather we found on the murder gun, and if we could find scratches on the inside of the briefcase, we'd have a good deal of circumstantial evidence."

And before anyone had taken in what Lieutenant Sheridan had said, he reached out for Harman's briefcase.

For a moment Harman lost his head. He jerked the briefcase away, turned and took a quick step towards the door. Then he caught himself, smiled, and said, "Certainly, Lieutenant, I would be only too glad to let you look at my briefcase later on. But I have some very important papers in here at the moment."

"You can take them out and put them on the captain's desk," Lieutenant Sheridan said.

"I don't choose to. They're private."

"I tell you Anson has confessed!" Dr. Lancaster shouted.

"How do you know he confessed?" Lieutenant Sheridan asked.

"He did, didn't he? Haven't you a written confession that——?"

"I asked you how you knew that?"

"I—someone told me."

"Who?"

"I can't remember."

"You'd better try," Lieutenant Sheridan said. "The police have told no one about that confession."

Dr. Lancaster and Harman exchanged glances.

Lieutenant Sheridan turned to Harman. "And have you decided whether you're going to let us look at the inside of your briefcase?"

Harman wet his lips. "I'd rather not."

"I know," Lieutenant Sheridan said. "However, we've found out a little something about it. It was given to you as a Christmas present by Crenshaw. He gave the chief of police one that was just like it. It's lined with red leather."

"Why pick on me?" Harman asked. "There are probably a thousand of those briefcases in the city. You say yourself that the chief of police has one."

"I know," Lieutenant Sheridan said soothingly, "but his doesn't have scratches on the inside."

"Well, you're not going to look in my briefcase," Harman said. He seemed to be on the verge of panic.

Captain Macon picked up a telephone and said, "Send in our laboratory technician. We want him to look at a briefcase."

Lieutenant Sheridan caught Neil Anson's eye. "I'm going to ask you to step into this other room for a moment, if you will, please, Anson."

In the private office, Neil watched in surprise as Lieutenant Sheridan opened the door of a closet which contained a basin with a little medicine cabinet over it. The officer took out a razor and handed it to Neil.

"Well, I'll be——" Anson said. "And I thought the police were dumb! You've——"

"Cleaned up a couple of very interesting cases," Lieutenant Sheridan said. "We'd have saved you a lot of trouble on that murder case if you'd co-operated a little better. But it turned out all right because you were able to give us some evidence on Dr. Lancaster that we didn't have."

Sheridan smiled at Neil. "We didn't know just what was happening with Durant on that lie-detector. He made perfect records every time Alva Kenton tested him. We had a pretty good idea of how the crime must have been committed; but we didn't know how Durant was beating the lie-detector, and that bothered us."

Neil looked at him in surprise. "And did you really have a witness who saw Harman come out of the bank?"

The officer grinned. "Of course not. If we'd had such a witness we'd have arrested Harman a couple of days ago."

"And the hold-up?"

"The hold-up was a phony. The man in the plastic mask was Durant himself. The money had actually gone out of the bank long before," Lieutenant Sheridan said. "Edwards and Durant worked out a nice scheme, and Harman, who was the brains of the outfit, decided to get rid of Crenshaw, who had found out that Durant's accounts were short.

"Durant and Harman planned the details. Dr. Lancaster gave Durant a glass test-tube of human blood so it would look as though the robber had been wounded.

"It all started when Durant went to see his friend Dr. Lancaster to see if hypnotism would help him beat the lie-detecteor. They found out it would."

"How do you know all this?"

"Ellen Jasper told us what she saw," Lieutenant Sheridan said. "We're not exactly fools, you know, Mr. Anson."

"I'll say you're not!" Neil said.

"The hold-up was intended to be very, very simple. It had all been carefully rehearsed. Durant knew that he would be alone in the counting room. He wired his ankles together, lay on the floor, tied a gag around his mouth and then kicked the burglar alarm, and held a gun ready. Nathan Edwards rushed to the door of the counting room, opened it, and George Durant, lying there on the floor, fired three shots over Edwards' head.

"Edwards fired too, being careful to fire through the open door into the alley. Then he grabbed the gun Durant had been using and bound some wire around Durant's wrists. He ran across the alley with the test tube of blood and dropped the gun in the ash can. Then he came back and freed Durant.

"In the meantime, Harman killed Crenshaw, according to schedule. The only thing was that your appearance gave Harman the idea of framing the murder on you.

"Our first big clue came from our laboratory technician," Lieutenant Sheridan went on. "When he examined the blood drops, our technical expert noticed that they didn't dry in the normal manner. He tested them and found that the blood had been treated so that it wouldn't readily coagulate.

"So then we began looking for other evidence, and we finally found an empty test tube which had contained blood, hidden in a small space back of a filing cabinet in the bank. As soon as we found it, we knew that it was an inside job and that we'd probably find a doctor mixed up in it."

Standing over the basin, with the razor in his hand, Neil Anson watched Lieutenant Sheridan with a certain amount of awe.

"It's just a matter of interpreting circumstantial evidence," the lieutenant said, and then added with weary resignation, "I would like to point out that if guys like you would quit thinking you're gifted amateurs who can step in without any previous experience whatever and show professional detectives up it would simplify things for us a heck of a lot.

"You should have called at headquarters as soon as you heard what had happened at the bank, particularly if you'd told us that you'd left your briefcase there."

"Well," Neil Anson said, "I was innocent and I thought I could uncover evidence——"

"Uncover evidence!" Lieutenant Sheridan said. "You're a fine imitation of a detective. You didn't even know that Ellen Jasper was in love with you. Now get those whiskers off your face. Then I'll try to find you a clean shirt. You look awful and you've got a girl to take home."

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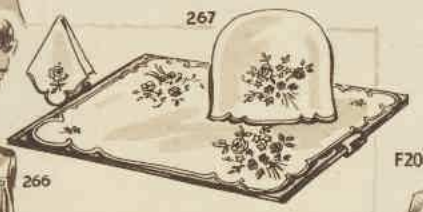

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